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Online communication in English and Italian in favour and against veganism: A corpus- based Analysis

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation explores how veganism is promoted and discussed in texts written in British English and in Italian. Differences between the two languages will be investigated in terms of what happens when dealing with the topic of veganism. It is hypothesised that veganism is perceived differently in the UK from how it is dealt with in Italy, as in my personal experience there appears to be more openness to this topic in the UK. As actions and ideas pass through language, the aim of this dissertation is to have a look at what happens when the topic of veganism is discussed in both languages and cultures.

This topic was chosen after noticing how veganism is generally well-accepted in the UK and in the USA as opposed to how it is perceived in Italy, where many preconceptions are still widespread. It could also be argued that a different approach can be noted towards those products that are present in the vegan diet as substitutes for animal-derived products. Therefore, this research also aims to discover the way in which the two languages deal with the promotion of veganism and certain products.

In the first chapter some literature will be reviewed on the topic of veganism. All the different forms of veganism and the attitudes towards them will be looked at. The way in which veganism is presented in newspapers in order to have also a first view of the stereotypes against veganism is also addressed. The concept of vegaphobia will be considered and discussed as it can be considered one of the key concepts when dealing with comments made by non-vegans. Masculinity will also be one of the concepts discussed in this work as it represents an important factor in understanding the dynamics that are connected to the choice of pursuing veganism, especially for men.

In the second chapter corpus linguistics will be presented. It will also be explained how this represents the key method for the analysis of the texts that will occur in Chapter 3. The software AntConc will also be introduced, a program which will be used for the corpus analysis. Lastly, the size of the data sets and their features will be given, in terms of the number of texts and the number of tokens.

In the third chapter an analysis will be carried out of the texts that make up the corpus by using the various tools available in the software AntConc. With the Wordlist tool the frequency of certain words in the corpus will be discussed. By using the Keyword tool considerations will be made after comparing different corpora.

By using the KWIC tool some words will be looked up in order to have a look at words and expressions that come with the searched word. With the N-Gram tool chunks of words that are present in the corpus will be considered. By looking at different sizes of the expressions found in the software changes will be observed. The Collocate tool will be useful in order to look at the words that come either before or after a given searched word and their frequencies.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Forms of veganism and attitudes towards them

The definition of veganism given by the Vegan Society is a good example of a clear and transparent statement of all the means of being vegan:

“Veganism is a philosophy and way of living which seeks to exclude—as far as is possible and practicable—all forms of exploitation of, and cruelty to, animals for food, clothing or any other purpose; and by extension, promotes the development and use of animal-free alternatives for the benefit of animals, humans and the environment. In dietary terms it denotes the practice of dispensing with all products derived wholly or partly from animals.”

There are, however, many different approaches, definitions and stereotypes related to veganism. For example, Barnhill et al. (2018) refer to two different versions of veganism: “broad absolutist veganism” and “modest ethical veganism”. The former version considers using animal products as always wrong. The latter restricts the animal derived products outside of cats, dogs, pigs, deer and chicken. It should be noted, however, that the purpose of the definition of veganism given by the Vegan Society aims to define all the aspects related to the life of a vegan. Whereas every example of lifestyle should be recognised, too many subcategories of veganism could end in misinterpretations of veganism by nonvegans.

The statement for which becoming vegan could mean to be cut off from cultural traditions (Barnhill et al. 2018) should be omitted, as many recipes and products are available to eat offering the same taste as animal derived products. Even products of the fashion industry that are similar to leather in appearance and functionality are available. The risk of malnutrition of which Barnhill et al. talk about should be updated as no risk of malnutrition in a plant-based diet is presented by many associations in the medical field, one of which the American Society of Nutrition and Dietetics that even labelled plant-based diet as safe for every stage of life. The consumption of animal-derived products is also linked to global warming as it takes more arable land and more water to produce meat rather than plant-based food (Barnhill et al. 2018). It could be argued, therefore, that the consumption of more plant-based food and less animal agriculture products could help reverse global warming.

Religion is also an aspect concerning veganism in some cultures (Barmhill et al. 2018). Religions such as Jainism, Hinduism and Buddhism promote the practice of ‘non-violence’ and therefore the practice of vegetarianism is frequent (Gheihman 2021). It should be noted that the term “vegetarianism” related to veganism could mean either the consumption of only plant-based products but also the consumption of some animal derived products such as dairy and eggs. “Flexitarianism”, the practice of eating mostly plant-based products with the exception of meat and dairy occasionally, is common among younger generations (Gheihman 2021). Three cultural threads of vegetarianism could be noted: “healthism”, which is related to food: “environmentalism”, related to planet; and speciesism, related to animals (Gheihman 2021).

Australian philosopher Peter Singer argues that animals like humans can feel pain and are therefore worthy of moral consideration. It should be noted, however, that even though many animal rights activists are vegan in their lives, the movements promote vegetarianism rather than veganism as it is seen as ‘less extreme’ (Gheihman 2021). It could be argued, however, that the notion of ‘extreme vegetarianism’ is misleading and dangerous as it places veganism in a position of negative behaviour, threatening the image of veganism itself. In lifestyle movements, on the contrary, being the source of identity an ideology, people who participate in lifestyle movements spread cultural values in the choices they make in everyday life (Gheihman 2021). A difference that needs to be pointed out is that the animal rights movement concerns anti-speciesism while the vegan movement is motivated also by healthism and environmentalism (Gheihman 2021).

Many people call themselves vegans even though they wear leather and enjoy horseback riding (Gheihman 2021). It should be noted, therefore, that there are many different aspects of veganism, although it would be accurate to refer to the definition by the Vegan Society when it comes to define veganism. Historically, plant-based diets have been considered low status while nowadays veganism is considered as a white and wealthy phenomenon (Gheihman 2021). This aspect could be linked to the fact that plant-based packaged products cost more than meat-derived ones. However, it should be noted that a diet based on fruit and vegetables is generally less expensive than an omnivore one. Another aspect that needs to be pointed out is the difference between activists who express their concerns with protests and demonstrations while cultural entrepreneurs use consensus-based tactics to appeal to consumers and they are more open to make

compromises (Gheihman 2021). In addition, lifestyle movements focus on individual choices and consumer-driven behaviour (Gheihman 2021). The fact that vegans are described as strict vegetarians (Cherry 2006) does not help create an environment in which veganism is considered as a well-balanced lifestyle. As consumers, people can take part in boycotts or buycotts by deciding to buy only certain types of products. By participating in buycotts, people impact the demand for a certain product or service (Beck, Ladwig 2021) and increase the demand of other items. The choice made by vegans not to consume certain products implicates both boycotts and buycotts as people might tend to either avoid buying some products or buy large amounts of them to promote them.

The disadvantage of water use is another aspect dear to people who become vegan for the planet as livestock farming contributes to global warming (Beck, Ladwig 2021). As people become more aware of the global warming emergency, more and more people approach the plant-based lifestyle. It might be therefore promising to push people to take steps towards adopting vegetarianism or redudcetarianism instead of veganism (Beck, Ladwig 2021). This should gradually lead to a greener lifestyle.

A distinction between strict individualism and strategic individualism related to veganism could be helpful in order to understand some of the different aspects of being vegan. The former brings together vegans that privately believe and publicly present veganism as an individual choice, not as a general imperative. The latter type of individualism groups vegans that believe that everyone should be vegan but avoid interpersonal conflict (Turner 2019). It should be noted that vegans that are open to nonvegans and which they tend therefore to avoid conflict have more chance for a fruitful dialogue with nonvegans.

However, vegans find themselves in situations where they feel the need to explain themselves to nonvegans and for this reason vegans tend to experience social tensions such as lack of acceptance by nonvegans (Turner 2019). For this reason, it should be noted once again that a non-judgmental approach by both vegans and nonvegans is the key to a profitable change of opinions. Furthermore, while vegans think that veganism is the right path to pursue for everybody, during interaction with nonvegans they tend to present veganism as a matter of choice by individualising their collective morals (Turner 2019). Vegans talk about veganism as a personal choice rather than as a collective obligation to animals (Turner 2019) in which they strongly believe. Yet, the stereotype is that vegans

are ‘pushy’ and ‘outspoken’ (Turner 2019). The problem of stereotype is a topic vegans have to deal with almost daily. Too many people react to vegan lifestyle as something of an utterly odd behaviour. This becomes a problem for vegans living their lives as even the plant-based options, such as plant-based meat and milk, are object of mockery towards the people consuming them.

1.2 Veganism in newspapers

Veganism is also talked about in newspapers, and the language used to describe it can be observed. In considering articles from 2005 to 2015, Righetti (2016) made an analysis regarding how the topic of veganism was faced by newspapers. In today’s newspapers the aspect of animals’ rights is often central. Healthism is more and more central and mainstream, while animalism has a different representation from veganism.

By analysing the articles expressing negative, neutral, and positive views of these issues, we can identify a rise in neutral and positive ones until the year 2015, when there started to be an increase in the negative ones instead. The increasing number of articles highlight health and malnutrition problems and gossip about famous people and their vegan diet. Most of the articles about veganism and health talk about veganism with considerable criticism (Righetti 2016). It is also pointed out that veganism is not only a diet but also fanaticism towards certain dietary regimes (Righetti 2016).

The fact that veganism is considered as a hard version of vegetarianism leads to a number of problems such as the fact that vegans are not well considered by nonvegans and are being labelled as people with utopistic wishes. Episodes of vegan children that underwent critical health issues is correlated to ascetism as an example of the negation of meat (Righetti 2016). It should however be pointed out that cases of malnutrition should be considered from a broader point of view as it could be possible that the children involved had issues not because of the choice of the vegan diet but because of poor choices made by parents regarding their children’s dietary lifestyle. News like these appeared to be reported many times in newspapers (Righetti 2016). Veganism results more as against personal needs and in opposition to the body, rather than a coherent expression of an ethic against cruelty (Righetti 2016).

It is also said that animals are there for the needs of humans (Righetti 2016). In this instance the prejudice against vegans is that they do not follow the rules of nature. This results in vegans being regarded as people going against nature while vegans themselves try to respect nature in all means. Some gossip about famous people relate to veganism as the source of their illness. However, cases had shown that the people involved suffered from orthorexia (Righetti 2016), a disease characterised by the obsession of eating only the food that are considered healthy. The news regarding famous people following a vegan diet and then having health problems is followed by the presumption for which a vegan diet should be followed only 'without exaggerations' (Righetti 2016) meaning that the vegan diet is related to unnecessary and dangerous exaggerations.

The case would be different when following a vegetarian diet, including some of the foods that are labelled as fundamental in a balanced diet. Articles about animalism are made by vegan societies that are present at festivals and sit-ins (Righetti 2016), therefore not by media unrelated to vegan lifestyle. Animalism is present in the newspapers through the voice of the protagonists and people who organise the events. In addition, vegans are often mocked, and their practice is often seen as an ascetism that poses impossible waivers as meat is considered too irresistible (Righetti 2016). It should be argued, however, that the taste is not related to an intrinsic characteristic of meat but is related to how the society considers the product involved.

Veganism is also often seen as only a superficial trend, as if it would one day be gone (Righetti 2016). The reason for this is to be found in the fact that veganism is often seen as a phase of someone's life, not as a lifestyle that involves the moral participation by the people deciding to go vegan. The link between veganism and fanaticism is always present (Righetti 2016). This aspect is considered linked to the fact that veganism is seen as the extreme version of vegetarianism while it should be considered as an aspect of life that is separate from the decision of going vegetarian.

Newspapers also often try to ridicule veganism by comparing it to practices outside veganism such as breatharianism (Righetti 2016). Linking potentially harmful practices such as breatharianism not only depicts veganism as a pointless practice but also emphasises the belief for which veganism is considered harmful. Veganism is more criticised when speaking of health rather than of the environmental aspect (Righetti 2016)

as it is widely considered that a vegan diet causes health issues, despite studies showing how a vegan diet is not only safe but also beneficial for certain health issues.

Furthermore, speaking about health, vegan associations are not considered reliable (Righetti 2016) as what they say is considered wrong from the start. The environmental aspect does not seem to be always criticised as it is perhaps deemed as a certain issue for which people must find a solution. However, not many articles expose the aspect of being vegan for the planet and also for the animals (Righetti 2016). Particularly, it should be considered that the decision of going vegan for the animals seems to not be widely accepted by the society while going vegan for health is generally more accepted. A study about the representation of veganism in UK national newspapers by Cole and Morgan (2011) states that ridicule is used to discredit veganism as veganism is considered to be difficult to maintain in practice. The stereotypes of ascetism, faddism, sentimentalism, and also hostile extremism are also found (Cole, Morgan 2011). These stereotypes are also found in Italian newspapers as argued in the work by Righetti.

Speciesism was first defined by Richard Ryder as analogous to sexism and racism and prejudice against nonhuman animals (Cole, Morgan 2011). The concept of speciesism is fundamental to understand some aspects of the vegan lifestyle as many vegans depict themselves as anti-speciesist. Positive articles found in the UK national newspapers were about reviews of vegan foods or explanations of arguments for veganism (Cole, Morgan 2011). The reason for this is to be found in the fact that articles written by associations of vegans or blogs about veganism appear to present veganism in a positive way. Neutral articles placed veganism without comment. These articles were about travel or food service reviews (Cole, Morgan 2011). In this case it is not argued whether veganism should be followed or not while facts are presented without taking sides. Negative articles had derogative discourses featuring anti-vegan stereotypes. Some articles were ambiguous as they had both positive and negative features. The ridicule of veganism was present through the attempt to define veganism as an eccentricity, by combining quasi-scientific claims with anti-vegan stereotypes (Cole, Morgan 2011). These features that are negatively connected to veganism give resonance to the belief for which veganism is seen as a negative way of living.

Veganism as ascetism was present through prefixing of vegan or vegans with adjectives of self-denial (e.g., strict vegan). The adjectives give the image for which it

takes extraordinary effort to stay vegan. However, vegans find it easy to stay vegan, by being motivated by the topic of animal rights (Cole, Morgan 2011). It should be pointed out, however, that vegans are motivated not only by the topic of animal rights but also by the topics of health and environmentalism. Ascetism reassures nonvegans of the normality of their dietary ethics. If veganism were portrayed positively, nonvegans would be in a precarious position (Cole, Morgan 2011). For this reason, ideas that relate negatively to veganism are given in order to self-convince nonvegans that only their way of living is right.

The 'difficulty' of veganism in newspapers places the ridiculing of vegans' food as unsatisfying and impossible to obtain (Cole, Morgan 2011). Again, stereotypes are present to discredit veganism and vegans. There are ways to reassure nonvegan readers that veganism is doomed to failure. For example, vegans are labelled as oversensitive (Cole, Morgan 2011). In this case the topic of animalism is diminished as meaningless. In addition, when the target is female, anti-vegan discourse blends with sexist discourse (Cole, Morgan 2011) by stereotyping veganism as a female-related issue. Only by consuming meat people demonstrate themselves as not 'too sensitive' (Cole, Morgan 2011). It should be noted, however, that in this case veganism is not considered in its whole, as only the dietary aspect is being considered. Furthermore, relegating veganism only to its dietary ethics leaves out all other aspects such as the choices made regarding clothing and beauty. Oversensitivity is also used to justify direct attacks on vegans.

Furthermore, vegans are labelled as hostile (Cole, Morgan 2011). The choices made by vegans seem, therefore, ridiculous. The denial of flesh is seen as extreme and tragic (Cole, Morgan 2011). It should be argued, therefore, that the consumption of meat is a central aspect in the society. For a nonvegan, being vegan is seen as difficult (Cole, Morgan 2011). The dietary aspect of veganism is often seen by nonvegans as difficult to follow as the denial of meat represents an impossible choice. The interests and experiences of vegans are never addressed. Furthermore, among the positive articles there is little mention to compassion and anti-speciesism (Cole, Morgan 2011). Positive articles appear to be made mainly by vegans addressing the vegan community while it is interesting that less importance is given to the moral aspect of veganism. It could be argued that vegans do not often mention anti-speciesism in order to not accuse nonvegans

of their choices while nonvegans do not talk about speciesism as it is a topic mainly discussed among vegans.

1.3 Anti-veganism and vegaphobia

For some people, veganism could seem as a negative way of living and for this reason movements of people against veganism appear on the internet. Anti-veganism is labelled as prejudice by scholars, protecting 'ethical veganism' under the UK Equality Act of 2010 (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022). However, not in all countries movements such as anti-veganism are officially recognised as prejudices, and little is done to protect vegans. The use of the slang 'soy-boy' is used to describe a man that lacks masculine qualities (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022) in groups and websites that label themselves as anti-vegans.

Reddit is an example of social network that offers anonymity to its users (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022) and for this reason it could serve as a good instance for a study on groups of anti-vegans. Research shows that interaction with online groups strengthens group-identification (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022). It could be argued, therefore, that by approaching online groups people feel stronger and therefore allowed to express themselves unchecked. Vegan opposition is the key to the group of the study on Reddit. There are five themes of discussion in the group: health, rationalism, animal death, experimental accounts, and morality.

The vegan diet is believed to lack essential nutrients and meat-based diets are considered healthy (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022) without even considering medical literature on the topic. In this group, many ex-vegans are present, and they give examples of physical and health issues that made them leave veganism. Words like 'study', 'science', 'research', 'fact' and 'true' are common in this area of discussion. The users denigrate vegans for their use of scientific literature (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022) as peer reviewed medical literature is in favour of the vegetarian or the vegan diet and gives examples of the benefits in terms of health. The users could be therefore criticised for the use of the 'myside bias'.

Veganism is also portrayed as naïvely idealistic. Vegans are therefore painted as 'ignorant and hypocritical'. There is also the belief for which the killing outside the

animal agriculture are more humane than an animal surviving in the wild (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022) even if it could be argued that many associations denounce animal abuse and illegal harmful actions against animals in the animal industry. In the group, the issue of militant vegans reoccurs as ‘radical’ vegans with their moral absolutism. Vegans often draw on the examples of rape, slavery, and murder regarding to animal agriculture and the users of the subreddit, the subsidiary thread of the social network Reddit, recall to these concepts as ‘emotional shock tactics’ (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd. 2022). On one hand, it can be said that vegans sometimes use harsh pictures to describe their point of view and by making so nonvegans are almost never attracted by their way of life even if they do not think that animals should be harmed. On the other hand, if the arguments of vegans were given more attention than they are, they would not need to draw on certain concepts to make them feel understood and communication between the two parts would be more fruitful.

The users of the anti-vegan group proudly have speciesist views. There appears also unsentimental attitude towards animal slaughter and death. In addition, these topics are used to make dark humour. Dark humour of the group then escalates in prejudicial attitude towards women and people of colour (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022). Here again, the feeling of being part of a group with the same beliefs facilitates the behaviour for which the people can express themselves without restraints. It is also interesting how the use of the first person ‘I’ is less used than the pronoun ‘we’ as individual people become integrated with the group (Gregson, Piazza, Boyd 2022) resulting in a gradual adjustment to the group.

As seen before, in many situations vegans are treated worse than nonvegans due to a bias against them called vegaphobia (Cole, Morgan 2011 in Horta 2018). Vegans often choose to not denounce the discrimination and focus rather on aiding nonhuman animals. Opinions given by vegans are not taken seriously by nonvegans. Vegans are considered less reliable than nonvegans when talking about the same topic (Horta 2018). Vegans also have to deal with the fact that they are often pressed to leave veganism. In addition, in the workplace vegans are sometimes forced to use animal products in order to carry out tasks. Another situation in which vegans find themselves in disadvantage are social and family gatherings where often few or no options are available (Horta 2018). In this particular case, a lack of good dialogue could be the cause for embarrassment as vegans might not

ask organisers to provide vegan options. On the other hand, nonvegans might not be engaging in providing vegan options. It could be argued, therefore, that communication is fundamental in providing a successful experience for everyone.

It should be pointed out that vegans are forced by the state to contribute for animal exploitation as they pay taxes that are also used to finance the animal industry. Even an ideal vegan who never suffered discriminatory treatment would not be able to not finance animal exploitation (Horta 2018). For this reason, a good relationship between vegans and nonvegans could be helpful to at least find some common ground on matters of animalism, health, and environment. However, institutions fail to consider the needs of vegans as public places have many food options but often none of them is vegan. Furthermore, vegans find themselves in disadvantage even in hospitals, where no vegan option is available (Horta 2018).

In terms of dietary change, a focus on social environment or food consumption would be better rather than focusing on diet and health (Vandermoere et al. 2019). In addition, a change of opinion based on a good exchange of views could be helpful. Meat eaters expect vegans to see themselves as morally superior to them. The study made by Vandermoere et al. (2019) shows that meat eaters and meat avoiders are similar in age and household size. A large proportion of meat avoiders are highly educated compared to meat eaters. Older people scored higher on vegaphobia compared to younger people. Both meat lovers and vegaphobes are more likely to be men rather than women. In addition, vegaphobia is less common with people who had a vegetarian or a vegan at home or in the group of friends. It could therefore be said that vegaphobia is a key element in understanding how people deal with veganism as it is often the bias which nonvegans have towards vegan people. Vegaphobia is also central in order to study how language is used when talking about veganism.

1.4 Masculinity

The study of gender related to veganism could be interesting in order to have a look at how through food differences between the masculine and the feminine are deeply present in the society. It is through actions and language that gender is constructed as gender is not an inherent, static quality of an individual (Butler, 1988 in Hart 2018). Meat eating is

considered fundamental for completing ‘masculine’ tasks, such as playing football (Brady, Ventresca, 2014 in Hart 2018). It should be pointed out that meat eating is also considered fundamental for some men in order for them to feel manly. On the contrary, men with plant-based diets are seen as weak and less masculine than meat-eating men (Ruby, Heine, 2014 in Hart 2018). In addition, the presence of the stereotype regarding food being labelled as feminine or masculine show how intrinsic the theme of gender inequality is present in our society.

It is through blogs that Hart analysed the gender norms of food. It is noted the presence of the stereotype of the rare red meat that satisfies the appetites of men while women carve food such as cucumber and tea sandwiches and pink-frosted sugar cookies (Salvio, 2012 in Hart 2018). Vegan men are seen less masculine if they are vegan for personal beliefs, than for health reasons (Thomas, 2016 in Hart 2018) as men are often described as ‘carnivores’ unwilling to eat plant-based meals. Some recipes made of meat-alternative food is promoted as suitable for men (Hart 2018). It is interesting to point out how meat-alternatives are presented to the public. Most of the times it is food that is expected to be bought by young people as a new alternative to the traditional food. In other cases the vegan alternatives are presented as the healthier version of the traditional food they represent. In this case it could be argued that being health the centre of attention, the female audience is the target of sales. This concept seems to be present in the language used on food blogs. Adjectives like ‘hearty’, ‘meaty’, ‘satisfying’, ‘huge’, and ‘messy’ are used to masculinize the meal (Hart 2018) as they represent the masculine way in which food is made.

Some blogs feature ‘partner-friendly recipes’ and others reassure the readers that there are recipes good enough for pleasing the male partner. Reassurances about the meal having enough protein (Hart 2018) is central in delivering the message for which the meal has enough masculinity to please even the men eating the food described. Blogs’ readers write that even nonvegan men liked the vegan food they served. Therefore, the men’s approval means that the recipe was a success. They also write about how they make sure that their husbands are eating healthy. In these comments words like ‘cravings’ and ‘juicy’ reclaim masculinity. People also write that they make healthy meals for their junk food loving male partners (Hart 2018). Here again, the stereotype for which men eat junk food and women eat healthy, light food is present.

There are also the stereotypes for which real men eat meat, men need to satisfy their appetites, and men need to be convinced to eat vegetables (Hart 2018). Since vegan men do not eat meat, they are often portrayed as feminine (Greenbaum, Dexter 2018). In addition, it should be pointed out that vegan men are less in number than the women who are vegan. It could be argued that use of the stereotype of masculinity acts as deterrent for men to embrace veganism. An example of the use of masculinity in stereotype is the Burger King advertisement that encourages men to eat hamburgers to contrast the softening of men (Greenbaum, Dexter 2018) and therefore ‘stay manly’.

Caring for animals is seen as a sign of weakness and femininity and the denial of animal suffering is connected to the emotional restriction men have to face (Greenbaum, Dexter 2018). It could in fact be said that men are often forced to hide their feelings when feeling emotional as if they do not they are seen as weak. Men’s masculine identities are challenged when they abstain from meat as they fail to considerate a crucial aspect of masculine behaviour. Veganism for men is promoted by mentioning health benefits and physical fitness (Greenbaum, Dexter 2018). Again, no mention is given to the topic of animal exploitation as men are not expected to care about it. For this reason, veganism is linked particularly to women as they are connected to nurturing and care about animals. Men on the other hand are presupposed to feel indifference towards animals raised for food (Greenbaum, Dexter 2018). On the contrary it is interesting to point out that for some men standing up for the rights of animals reinforces their masculinity (Greenbaum, Dexter 2018). In this case, men being proudly vegan are not ashamed of their feelings and they do not hide them, even if they know that some people see them as demasculinised.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Corpus linguistics: Methods and applications

Corpus linguistics aims to study language rules and variations by using corpora. A corpus is a collection of texts with enough words for the study of different patterns of language. It could be argued that corpus linguistics explores the frequency of words and patterns, as different types of frequencies are studied.

Corpus linguistics draws conclusions based on attested language use rather than intuition (McEnery, Gabrielatos, 2006) as it is through the study of natural language that the real use of language is perceived. The methods and the types of corpora studied are influenced by the theoretical orientation of the researchers. It is first Firth (1951/1957 in McEnery, Gabrielatos, 2006) that introduced the term collocation referring to the meaning of words in the contextual meaning. After that, collocation was related to the concept of the probability of occurrence in the corpus of two words (McEnery, Gabrielatos, 2006). It is through the concept of collocation that frequency is connected to the contextual meaning of words.

Examples of patterns are frequencies of occurrence of linguistic elements, for example, how often morphemes, words or phrases occur in a corpus. Another object of study is the co-occurrence of certain elements, such as how often morphemes occur in words or given structures occur in a text (Gries, 2009). It could therefore be argued that as corpus linguistics is based on frequency, the study of the occurrence of certain patterns plays a key role in the discovery of certain ways in which the language behaves. Corpus linguistics is concerned with whether something is attested in corpora, but also with whether something is attested in some corpora more often than in others, and with whether something is observed more or less often than expected. For this reason, statistical methods are important in corpus linguistics (Gries, 2009). It should also be pointed out that statistics is the basis of the study of patterns such as frequency.

There are many patterns that can be studied and for various purposes. Two linguistic areas to which corpus linguistics can be applied are first language acquisition and second language acquisition. Other areas are language and culture along with historical developments. Corpus linguistic methods have also been used to conduct studies of aspects of phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and psycholinguistics (Gries, 2009). This last area involves the study of psychology applied to linguistics, that is the

frequency of certain aspects studied in psycholinguistics, such as the occurrence of certain errors in spoken language. Corpus-based analysis are also used in pragmatics, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, metaphor, and stylistics. Corpora have also been used for the production of reference grammars and dictionaries.

In corpus linguistics it is important that the texts of the corpus are produced in natural communicative settings (Gries, 2009). The reason for this is that the texts should represent how language is used in real communicative situations.

There are different types of corpora. General corpora represent a given language as a whole. By contrast, specific corpora are restricted to a certain pattern, such as a given register or genre. Diachronic corpora represent how a language develops and changes over time. Synchronic corpora collect texts coming from the same point of time. While monolingual corpora provide information for only one language, parallel corpora contain texts from several different languages. Static corpora have a fixed size, while dynamic corpora may be expanded in terms of number of texts or words (Gries, 2009).

The presence of different types of corpora is strongly related to the fact that different texts require a different approach and therefore it could be helpful to store them in different kinds of corpora. In addition, a good corpus should be able to represent all the feature of a given language variety (Reppen, Simpson-Vlach, 2019). Examples of what a corpus should represent of a given register are specific speakers' or writers' discourse modes, topics, and demographics.

A corpus lends itself to various types of language analysis. Let's start from the generation and analysis of word lists. A word list contains a list of all the words contained in the corpus. For example, through word lists a teacher can decide which words to include in teaching according to frequency (Reppen, Simpson-Vlach, 2019). For this reason, frequency-related studies are helpful in the field of foreign language teaching as the possibility of checking which words are most used in the corpus selected and therefore which words should be used for creating class activities and exercises. Another tool of corpus linguistics are Key word in context (KWIC). These can be used to explore the uses of a target word. The analysis of collocations provides information about grammatical and semantic patterns for individual lexical items.

Corpora have been used to explore differences and similarities between different varieties of English (Reppen, Simpson-Vlach, 2019). Although corpora have been mainly

used to study the English language, it should be pointed out that the study of corpora could be done with any language, and it would benefit the study of any language. Many contributions have been made to linguistic investigation thanks to the study of corpora. An example is language description and the production of reference resources, in particular lexicogrammar and lexical approaches to language analysis and description (McEnery, Gabrielatos, 2006). Through lexicogrammar a study of the relation of interdependence of vocabulary and syntax can be made. This study could help analyse the relationship between vocabulary and syntax as the study of frequency can benefit both vocabulary and syntax studies. The study of change in the language is an important contribution of corpora study (McEnery, Gabrielatos, 2006) as the change of language happens also in terms of frequency change. A study of frequency could be useful to the study of language change in terms of word list change throughout time.

2.2 The AntConc software

The use of software for corpus analysis can be helpful in order to obtain accurate and thorough results regarding the use of language. AntConc is one of the pieces of software available and is the one that was chosen for the present work. Created by Professor Laurence Anthony, AntConc allows to analyse language in terms of concordance by using different tools such as the Wordlist and Cluster tools. However, these are not the only tools that are present in the software.

An analysis of words, phrases, or even parts of words can be made using the KWIC (keyword in context) tool. This tool allows to see how words or groups of words are used in the corpus. By searching a word, the software will show all the hits in which that word is used and its context. By analysing what comes either before or after the word allows to see which words are more used before or after the searched word. It is also possible to analyse up to three levels of context both before and after the searched word. This tool is helpful with the analysis of language in terms of context and word choice.

Another very useful device is the Plot tool. By searching a word, this tool allows to see where in the files selected the search word is used. By visually seeing where the search word is used, its frequency can be analysed and therefore the use of the word in the texts.

An interesting feature of this tool is the possibility of checking files with different lengths by having also a view of how the word is distributed in relation to the file's length.

The File tool is a rather simple but useful tool that allows to see the searched word in the whole file. It is sometimes important to see the whole file after using the Plot tool for example as it shows directly where and when the search word is used.

Another important tool of the AntConc software is the Cluster tool. By searching a selected word this tool will show all the different combinations of words containing the word searched. By having a look at the frequency of the clusters shown it can be observed which clusters are more used in the analysed texts.

The N-Gram tool is useful to have a look at all the chunks of words, without having to search a word. Looking at the frequency in which clusters are present in the texts can be helpful to see which are more present. This could be helpful in order to analyse the most frequent chunks of words that are present in the corpus.

A helpful tool for looking at how single words are placed in the texts is the Collocate tool. By searching a word, the software will show a list of words that are used before and after the searched word. The software will also show the frequency and the likelihood of the words, parameters that can be useful for analysing the words related to the searched word more in depth.

The Word list tool can be useful to have a general view of the most or least used words in the files that are being analysed. In addition, by searching a single word it will be shown its frequency.

A tool that is strictly connected to the Word list tool is the Keyword tool. This is used to compare two corpora or a corpus and a word list. The results that come from this tool can be useful to see the most common words deriving from the comparison of the two corpora.

Through the use of these tools language can be analysed in context. The use of this software in corpus linguistics can therefore be used to understand the trend or even the development of language. In addition, this software can be used with different languages and therefore it can be useful in the analysis and comparison of two or more languages. Another interesting aspect is the easiness of use as it is pretty much straight forwards to understand and use. Also the settings that can be useful to change some patterns are easy to use and do not require any proficiency in the use of the software.

2.3 Size of data analysed in AntConc

AntConc allows to look and analyse files with any number of texts and words. This allows to analyse a corpus with either a great quantity of words or a smaller one.

For this work rather small corpora will be used, as it is believed that their size should be enough to get useful results. To be precise, four different corpora will be used, each with a different number of files. Two corpora will contain pro-veganism and anti-veganism texts in the English language and the other two corpora will contain pro-veganism and anti-veganism texts in the Italian language. Analysis regarding the single corpus or two corpora together will be made. The pro-veganism corpus in the English language contains twelve files with a total of nine thousand two hundred and seventy-two tokens. The anti-veganism corpus in the English language has a total of ten files and seven thousand and eleven tokens. The pro-veganism corpus in the Italian language contains eight files and a total of ten thousand eight hundred and twenty-nine tokens. The anti-veganism corpus in the Italian language has six files with six thousand six hundred and eighty-five tokens.

	Number of files	Number of tokens
Pro-veganism English corpus	12	9272
Anti-veganism English corpus	10	7011
Pro-veganism Italian corpus	8	10829
Anti-veganism Italian corpus	6	6685

2.4 Methods

For the analysis of the texts the division of the materials in four different corpora will be useful in order to analyse how the language used is different in relation to either pro-veganism or anti-veganism ways of thought. Using the KWIC tool, a number of words will be searched and through the results obtained an analysis will be performed of the context in relation to the words before and after the searched word.

The results given by the Plot tool will show different features with each file analysed. An interesting analysis of the files will display different characteristics of frequency and dispersion of the searched word. The use of the Cluster tool will be useful to search all

the most used word clusters among the different files in both English language and Italian language findings. Different words will be searched and different results in the different languages will be shown. Using the N-Gram tool multiple chunks of words will be looked in each corpus in order to check all different combinations present in the corpus. Chunks of different number of words will be analysed in order to gain a broader view of the results.

Using the Wordlist tool, a look will be taken to consider the type of words that are most common among the texts and their frequency. Using the Keyword tool, comparisons between the single corpora will be made, in order to perform a quantitative analysis of data.

CHAPTER 3

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of the corpora in both English and Italian language. The analysis is carried using different tools that are present in the AntConc software.

3.1 Wordlists

By looking at the frequency of certain words in the different corpora, the frequency of each word can be analysed. In the pro-veganism English corpus the word “vegan” has a frequency of one hundred sixty-nine. In the anti-veganism English corpus the same word appears only forty-one times. It can therefore be said that the word “vegan” is used differently on the two corpora. In the Italian pro-veganism corpus the word “vegano” appears for a total of forty times. In the anti-veganism Italian corpus the word “vegano” appears only twenty times. It can be noted the fact that in both the anti-veganism corpora the word “vegan” in both English and Italian language appears way less than in the pro-veganism corpora.

It seems that the plant-based diet and the plant-based options do not appear very frequently in the anti-veganism English corpus. In the Italian pro-veganism corpus the word “vegetale” has a frequency of twenty-seven. The same word in the anti-veganism Italian corpus appears only one time. In Italian, just as in the English language it can be said that little reference is being made to plant-based food or diet. In addition, it should be pointed out that in the Italian anti-veganism corpus the word “vegetale”, which corresponds to the word “plant”, appears even less than the word “plant” in the anti-veganism English corpus. Therefore, it can be said that in the Italian language less reference is made to plant-based lifestyle and food.

In the pro-veganism English corpus, the word “animal” appears eight times. In the anti-veganism English corpus the same word appears forty-one times. For the first time, the word searched appears more in the anti-veganism corpus rather than on the pro-veganism one. The reason for that could be in the fact that topics regarding animals are more present in the anti-veganism corpus while less space is given to discuss animals in the pro-veganism corpus. In the Italian pro-veganism corpus the word “animale” has a total frequency of twenty-two while in the anti-veganism Italian corpus the same word appears fourteen times. In this case it seems that while the same word appears more in

the pro-veganism corpus, it can be said that the anti-veganism Italian corpus presents more stress on topics related to animals than the anti-veganism English corpus.

The word “products” appears in the pro-veganism English corpus a total of thirty-three times while in the anti-veganism English corpus the same word appears eighteen times. It can be observed that in the pro-veganism corpus more references are made to the products for everyday life while less space is given to them in the anti-veganism corpus. By looking up the word “prodotti” in the pro-veganism Italian corpus it can be noted that the word searched appears forty-four times. In the anti-veganism Italian corpus, the same word appears only eight times. It can be observed the fact that also in this case the anti-veganism corpus seems to not focus very much on topics that are connected to veganism-related products.

By looking up the word “diet” in the pro veganism English corpus it can be noted that this word occurs eighteen times in the corpus. By looking the same word in the anti-veganism corpus, it can be observed that it occurs for a total of thirty times. In this case the word “diet” seems to lead to more discussion in the anti-veganism corpus. The reason for that could also be in the fact that there is more stress on the dietary aspect on veganism rather than on its lifestyle more in general. In the Italian pro-veganism corpus the word “dieta” appears forty-nine times. In the anti-veganism Italian corpus the same word appears thirty-nine times. It should be noted the fact that in the Italian language there is less stress on diet in the anti-veganism corpus than in the English anti-veganism corpus. In this case it could therefore be argued that the English and the Italian language differ with regards to how the word “diet” in English and “dieta” in the Italian language are used.

In the English pro-veganism corpus, the word “meat” appears forty-nine times. In the anti-veganism English corpus, the same word has a frequency of forty-six. While it can be said that the word “meat” appears less in the anti-veganism corpus, it should be noted that the results are mostly similar in the two corpora as little difference is present. By looking up the word “carne” in the pro-veganism Italian corpus it can be noted that this word appears fifty-two times while in the anti-veganism corpus it appears only thirty times. This is an interesting result as it can be noted the fact that the word “carne” is expected to be more present in the anti-veganism corpus as meat represents a product that

is absent in the vegan lifestyle. In addition, it could be argued that meat seems to be discussed more in pro vegan texts rather than on anti-veganism texts.

The word “alternatives” in the pro-veganism English corpus appears seventeen times. The same word appears only one time in the anti-veganism English corpus. It seems that in this case vegan related products are less discussed in the anti-veganism English while, as it has been discussed before, the word related to animal products are much more present in the pro veganism corpus. In the Italian pro-veganism corpus, the word “alternative” is present but only with a frequency of three. In the Italian anti-veganism corpus, no hits are found. The reason for this could be in the fact that the word “alternative” in Italian is not used as widely to refer to vegan alternatives to meat and dairy as in the English language. In the Italian language the word “prodotti” seems to be used to refer to both animal-derived and vegan alternatives.

The frequency of the word “options” is thirteen in the pro veganism English corpus. In the anti-veganism English corpus, the same word has a frequency of two. It can be argued that in the anti-veganism corpus less space is given to the discussion of options related to veganism. By searching the word “opzioni” in both Italian pro-veganism corpus and anti-veganism corpus no hits are found. The reason for this could be in the fact that in the Italian language vegan alternatives are not called “options” as they are not called “alternatives” as seen before.

By searching the word “proteins” in the Word tool it can be observed that the frequency of this word in the pro veganism English corpus is two. Instead, by looking the same word in the anti-veganism English corpus no hits are found. This result is not as it would be expected as it could be argued that a stress on the topic of protein intake could be expected in the anti-veganism corpus. The word “proteine” in the Italian pro-veganism corpus has a total frequency of twelve. The same word looked into the anti-veganism Italian corpus has a frequency of eight. In this case, just as in English, it would be expected much more stress on topics related to protein intake as it is one of the issues nonvegans come up with when talking about veganism. Instead, the frequency of the words “proteins” and “proteine” seems to be less in the anti-veganism corpora than in the pro-veganism corpora.

In the pro-veganism English corpora the word “children” appears four times while in the anti-veganism English corpus the same word appears sixteen times. It can therefore

be observed the fact that in the anti-veganism corpus there is much more focus on topics related to children than in the pro veganism corpus. This result could be a consequence for the fact that the topic of vegan diet on children often generates negative opinions about it as a vegan diet on children is usually not accepted by nonvegans. By looking at the Italian pro-veganism corpus it can be observed that the frequency of the word “bambini” is one while on the anti-veganism Italian corpus the same word appears nine times. The results concerning the Italian corpora are as expected even by looking at the English corpora as it could be argued that often veganism for children is not generally accepted for health reasons even if the medical community says that veganism is safe for all stages of life as seen on chapter one.

By looking up the word “nutrition” in the English pro-veganism corpus it can be seen that the frequency of this word is two. The same result seems to appear on the anti-veganism English corpus. In the Italian pro-veganism corpus the word “nutrizione” appears five times while in the anti-veganism Italian corpus the same word has no hits. This result seems to not be very clear as it could be argued that the nutritional aspect of veganism is not discussed while it has been argued that the dietary aspect, especially of children is actually discussed. It could be argued that the words “nutrition” and “nutrizione” are not very much used. However, this does not mean that the nutritional aspects of veganism are not discussed in the corpora analysed.

3.2 Keywords

By putting the pro-veganism English corpus as the target corpus and the anti-veganism English corpus as the reference corpus results are as follows.

	Type	Rank	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	Range_Tar	Range_Ref	Keyness (Likelihood)	Keyness (Effect)
1	burger	1	61	0	4	0	68.874	0.013
2	plant	2	78	4	10	1	62.870	0.017
3	vegan	3	169	41	9	7	52.685	0.036
4	based	4	68	4	10	2	52.613	0.015
5	milk	5	34	2	4	1	26.260	0.007
6	cheese	6	22	0	3	0	24.800	0.005
7	burgers	7	28	1	2	1	24.554	0.006
8	taste	8	20	0	5	0	22.543	0.004
9	flavour	9	18	0	5	0	20.287	0.004
10	fish	10	27	2	2	2	19.251	0.006
11	texture	11	17	0	4	0	19.160	0.004
12	your	12	36	5	8	3	18.606	0.008
13	the	13	405	216	10	10	18.393	0.082

Figure 1: Keyword list of the English pro-veganism corpus against the English anti-veganism corpus

As predictable, the words that turn out to be key are mostly related to food. It can therefore be said that in the pro veganism English corpus space is given to food related topics. Of course, it should be added that the words that are present in the results are related to vegan food or alternatives to meat and dairy. However, it should be pointed out that the word “cheese” is present while no words like “cheeze” are present. It could therefore be argued that the word “cheese” is used instead of “cheeze” to refer to plant-based options and that “cheeze” is not very often used as it would be expected by looking at the texts. In addition, it seems that to refer to vegan alternatives words like “plant” “based” and “vegan” are used.

By inverting the two corpora, meaning putting as the target corpus the anti-veganism corpus and as the reference corpus the pro-veganism corpus different results are shown.

	Type	Rank	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	Range_Tar	Range_Ref	Keyness (Likelihood)	Keyness (Effect)
1	animals	1	66	11	4	5	60.731	0.019
2	not	2	61	16	7	8	42.321	0.017
3	i	3	96	43	6	6	38.580	0.027
4	that	4	135	79	9	10	35.112	0.037
5	animal	5	41	8	6	4	34.592	0.012
6	arguments	6	20	0	3	0	33.738	0.006
7	argument	7	17	0	3	0	28.673	0.005
8	lives	8	21	2	3	2	24.084	0.006
9	then	8	21	2	4	2	24.084	0.006
10	death	10	13	0	3	0	21.922	0.004
11	eat	11	31	8	6	4	21.725	0.009
12	should	12	21	3	5	3	20.713	0.006
13	people	13	33	10	6	6	20.287	0.009
14	but	14	58	29	8	7	19.760	0.016
15	it	15	106	73	10	12	19.040	0.029
16	are	16	95	64	9	10	18.022	0.026

Figure 2: Keyword list of the English anti-veganism corpus against the English pro-veganism corpus

It seems that the words that are presented are not related to food as in the previous results, but they draw on topics that are related to the ethical aspect of veganism. Words like “animals”, “death”, and “people” seem to reflect the fact that the discussion is about aspects related to life and death. It can therefore be argued that less space is given to discuss the dietary aspect of veganism as the main focus seems to be on arguments related to ethics. The word “eat” seems to be the only one related to food and its frequency in both target corpus and reference corpus does not seem to be very high compared to other words. Also the word “people” is not at the top in terms of frequency. It could therefore be argued that while it can be said that the main focus is the ethical aspect of veganism, little space is given to discuss people’s behaviour while much more space is given to the role of animals in the discussion about veganism.

Also by checking the results of the Keyword tool in the Italian language interesting results come up. First, let’s have a look at the results created by the software with the pro-veganism Italian corpus as the target corpus and the anti-veganism Italian corpus as the reference corpus.

	Type	Rank	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	Range_Tar	Range_Ref	Keyness (Likelihood)	Keyness (Effect)
1	mi	1	56	1	3	1	45.809	0.010
2	ho	2	41	1	3	1	31.953	0.008
3	vegetale	3	27	1	6	1	19.282	0.005
4	base	4	31	2	5	2	18.598	0.006
5	mia	5	19	0	3	0	18.282	0.004

Figure 3: Keyword list of the Italian pro-veganism corpus against the Italian anti-veganism corpus

It is interesting to note that the words “vegetale” and “base” have quite different frequency in the target word. This in an unexpected result as it would rather be expected that the two words would come together and therefore have the same frequency while the frequency of the word “vegetale” is twenty-seven while the frequency of “base” is thirty-one. In this case it is difficult to tell where the focus of discourse is located as little results are shown. However, it should be pointed out that in this case no results are strictly related to food as no words related to different type of foods are present.

By looking at the results of the Keyword tool with the anti-veganism Italian corpus as the target corpus and the pro-veganism Italian corpus as the reference corpus different results are shown.

	Type	Rank	Freq_Tar	Freq_Ref	Range_Tar	Range_Ref	Keyness (Likelihood)	Keyness (Effect)
1	ai	1	30	4	4	3	37.074	0.009
2	allunga	2	16	0	1	0	30.844	0.005
3	rispondere	2	16	0	1	0	30.844	0.005
4	avocado	4	13	0	2	0	25.057	0.004
5	onnivori	5	13	1	2	1	18.812	0.004
6	etica	6	18	4	1	2	17.679	0.005

Figure 4: Keyword list of the Italian anti-veganism corpus against the Italian pro-veganism corpus

With these results it can be observed that there is reference to food as the word “avocado” is present. However, also the word “etica” is present. It can therefore be argued that both the dietary and the ethical aspect of veganism are being discussed. It should however be pointed out that the word “etica” comes as the last of the results with a frequency in the target corpus of eighteen and a frequency in the reference corpus of four. It can therefore be said that ethics does not come as the main topic being discussed when

veganism is debated. On the contrary, the dietary aspect of veganism seems to be referenced more.

3.3 KWIC

By looking at some words through the KWIC tool it is possible to analyse different patterns before and after the selected word. By searching the words “vegan” for the English corpora and “vegano” for the Italian corpora some interesting findings were observed. In the pro-veganism corpora in English language the word “vegan” is followed by words related to food, such as “fish alternatives”, “burger”, “products”. In some instances, the word “vegan” is followed by “society” as it is related to the Vegan Society, an association of people advocating veganism. In the pro-veganism corpora in the Italian language the word “vegano” is followed by words that are related to renouncing to eat some food and negation such as “significa che non”, “non acquistare”, “rinunciare”. On the other hand, words coming before “vegano”, such as “stile di vita” and “diventare” are related to lifestyle.

It should be noted therefore, that in the English texts the stress is on food products while in the Italian texts the stress is on the need to stop eating certain products that are part of an omnivorous lifestyle. By looking up the word “vegan” in the anti-veganism English corpus the words that follow the selected word such as “diet” and “children” are related to the belief for which the vegan diet is considered harmful, especially for children. In its Italian counterpart, the corpus presents words that are related to what vegans should not be doing for example “non dovrebbe dare” and “non dovrebbe usare”. For this reason, it must be noted that while both the English and the Italian anti-veganism corpora both give reasons against a vegan diet the Italian seems to differ in terms of what vegan people should not do. Furthermore, by having a look at all four corpora it should be noted that the words following the word “vegan” in the English corpora are related to the diet while in the Italian corpora the words following “vegano” are related to lifestyle.

In the next sections an analysis will be attempted of some recurrent terms.

3.3.1 *Alternative*

By searching the word “alternative” in the English pro-veganism corpus it can be found that the words that precede the target word are related to the food products that are

meant to be a substitute for certain flavours coming from animal products such as in “vegan fish” and the compound word “vegan-friendly”. The collocates after the searched word do not indicate any similarity between them. However, it can be noted that there is a repetition of the conjunction “if” in “if you’re having” and “if you’re looking”. In the anti-veganism version of the corpus there is no mention of the word “alternative”. In this case it could be argued that no space is given to discuss the vegan alternatives to meat and dairy products or simply the writers do not wish to mention it while discussing the topic of veganism. No reference to vegan alternatives is made in the Italian corpora either.

3.3.2 *Meat/carne*

When searching the word “meat” in the English pro-veganism and “carne” in the Italian corpora the words that follow, such as “free burger”, “and dairy production”, “consumption” are all related to industry products. However, it should be noted the use of the words “meat free burger” used as a synonym of “meat alternatives”. In pre-modifying position of the word searched “Beyond” and “Richmond’s” can be found, both of which are related to two of the major meat alternatives that can be found on the market. In the Italian version of the pro-veganism corpus, it can be found reference to food products as well. In this case, however, more space is given to the harmful consequences of some products as in “rossa cancerogena” and “provoca più inquinamento” as postmodifiers of the word “carne”. In the premodifier position words such as “mangiatore di” can be found which give a negative connotation to people eating meat. In the English anti-veganism corpus, it can be observed that there is a repetition of the words “and” and “eating” after the selected word as in “and animal”, “and dairy”, “eating demands”, “eating group”. Collocates right before the selected word include terms related to eating as in “eat” and “eating”. Words that cannot be found in the pro-veganism corpus include “most humanely raised” as it appears to be used only by nonvegans. In the anti-vegan Italian corpus, the words preceding “carne” are related to the consumption of animal products as, for example, “consume di”, “consume moderato di”. Also the words following the target word are related to products of the animal industry as in “e di derivati” and “uova e latte”. It should be noted that in the English corpora more space is given to products of the food industry while in the Italian corpora there is more stress on food consumption and its consequences.

3.3.3 Children/bambini

When looking up the word “children” in the pro-veganism English corpora reference to children’s routine is made in words coming before the target word as in “animals to show” and “alternative for their”. It is interesting to note that in the Italian pro-veganism corpus words like “troppo limitante” appear after the word “bambini” while no reference is made to everyday life. In the anti-vegan English corpus stress on negative consequences of malnutrition are made as, for example, “leads to deficiencies” and “negatively affects”. In the anti-vegan Italian corpus, there is a stress on children and their needs as in “che possono ritrovarsi con dei problemi” and “fa bene la carne” after the word “bambini”.

3.3.4 Diet/dieta

By searching the word “diet” in the pro veganism English corpus it can be noted that before the searched word there are references that relate to both food and consequences of a certain type of lifestyle as in the compounds “plant-based” and “most environmentally-friendly”. In the pro-veganism Italian corpus too, there are references to both the practical aspect and the environmental aspect of the vegan diet as in the postmodifier “a base vegetale” and premodifier “per il pianeta” of the word “dieta”. In the anti-veganism English corpus reference is made to negative implications of the vegan diet on children as in “imposed on children” and “negatively affects children”. In the Italian anti-veganism corpus space is given to words related to health as in the postmodifier “squilibrata per i vegani” and premodifier “provocato dalla ferrea” of the word “dieta”. It is interesting to note that both English and Italian corpora lay on common ground as they share the fact that both stress on the practical side of veganism and they also share a general disbelief for the vegan diet as a matter of health.

3.3.5 Nutrition, cheeze, cheezeburger

The use of the word “nutrition” seems to place shows some differences among the corpora analysed. In the anti-veganism English corpus, the word “nutrition” is followed by “from food before” and “the vital concept” while before the target words there are expressions such as “about child nutrition”. No instances have been found in the Italian anti-veganism corpus. It should be noted how again there are references to child nutrition in the anti-veganism corpus while no reference is made to the effect of a vegan diet in the

pro-veganism English and Italian corpora as expressions such as “boost the” or “esparto in” do not take into consideration the beneficial aspects of a vegan diet.

The use of the words “cheeze” and “cheezeburger” should be used. In these cases, the letter “s” is replaced by the letter “z”. The meaning of the word does not change while what is interesting is the fact that to distinguish the animal product to the vegan product another letter is used maintaining the same pronunciation. It is also interesting to note that no phenomenon like this is seen in the Italian corpora. This could mean that in the Italian language no space is given to vary the name of a certain product and there is no use of a change in the word related to plant-based alternatives.

3.4 N-Grams

By searching results using the N-Gram tool some interesting findings were obtained.

Analysing the pro-veganism English corpus, it can be found that the very first hit is “plant based”.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	plant based	1	61	10
2	in the	2	39	10
3	it s	3	35	9
4	of the	3	35	9
5	to the	5	26	8
6	you can	6	25	5
7	the vegan	7	21	5
8	and the	8	18	9
9	on the	9	17	7
10	for a	10	15	7
11	for the	10	15	7
12	is a	10	15	6
13	vegan burger	10	15	2
14	you re	10	15	6
15	a plant	15	14	5
16	best vegan	15	14	2
17	if you	15	14	5
18	g per	18	13	1
19	the best	18	13	4
20	there are	18	13	6
21	meat free	21	12	2
22	to be	21	12	5
23	vegan fish	21	12	1

Figure 5: N-Grams of the English pro-veganism corpus

This is interesting because it denotes that the most used chunk of words used in the corpus with a frequency of sixty-nine is strictly related to the use of words very much related to veganism. Another interesting result is the chunk of words “vegan burger” ranked ten with a frequency of fifteen that indicates the fact that very much space is given to food-related topics. The use of “meat free” on rank twenty-one with a frequency of twelve is very much related to the previous finding as vegan products are often labelled as “without meat” products in the English language. Another interesting finding is the use of the expression “vegan fish” which AntConc ranks twenty-one with a frequency of twelve. This expression is related to vegan alternatives to fish products, and it is only found in the English corpus while no expression alike is found in the Italian counterpart.

By increasing the N-Gram size to four some changes can be observed.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	a plant based diet	1	7	1
2	nutritional information main ingredient	2	6	1
3	information main ingredient soya	3	4	1
4	per gfat g per	3	4	1
5	you re looking for	3	4	2
6	every public sector menu	6	3	1
7	g per gcalories per	6	3	1
8	g per gfat g	6	3	1
9	gfat g per gcalories	6	3	1
10	here at pul we	6	3	1
11	if you re looking	6	3	1
12	in the public sector	6	3	1
13	mountains lbs plant based	6	3	1
14	on every public sector	6	3	1
15	one of the most	6	3	3
16	re looking for a	6	3	1
17	s no need to	6	3	2
18	the world s first	6	3	2
19	there are plenty of	6	3	1
20	there s no need	6	3	2
21	you think you ll	6	3	1
22	a clear indicator that	22	2	2
23	a plant based option	22	2	1

Figure 6: N-Grams of the English pro-veganism corpus (four-Grams)

In position one with a frequency of seven we can find the expression “a plant based diet”. This is an interesting result as it shows that in the expression “plant based” the word “diet” is following and therefore a stress on the nutritional aspect of veganism is found. In addition, the second chunk of words with a frequency of six in the results appears to be “nutritional information main ingredient”. Again, diet appears to be the main topic when discussing veganism in English texts. It is only in position 23 with a rank of 22 and a frequency of two that the words “a plant based option” is observed. It should be noted that the use and discussion of vegan options is not at the top of the discussed topics in the pro-veganism English corpus. There appears to be some expressions indicating food such

as “first vegan babybel cheese” and “fish and seafood alternatives” in position fifty-six and fifty-seven, respectively. It is only in the central position of the results of the N-Gram tool that food-related expressions appear.

By increasing the N-Gram size to five it can be observed that the first result with a rank of one and a frequency of four is “nutritional information main ingredient soya” and the third one with a frequency of three is “gfat g per calories per”.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	nutritional information main ingredient soya	1	4	1
2	g per gfat g per	2	3	1
3	gfat g per gcalories per	2	3	1

Figure 7: N-Grams of the English pro-veganism corpus (five-Grams)

In these cases the nutritional aspect of veganism is present as expected by looking at the N-gram results with a size of three words.

By looking at the anti-veganism English corpus it can be observed that no reference is made to vegan alternatives.

On the contrary, the presence of the words “animal products” at rank five with a frequency of fifteen can be observed. It should be noted that the first difference that can be observed between the pro-veganism English corpus and the anti-veganism English corpus is that there appears to be reference to different types of foods and the anti-veganism corpus has a stress on the use of animal products and vegan options are not even mentioned. Another interesting result is the chunk of words “vegan diet” in position nine, rank ten and with a frequency of fourteen. It can be noted that reference is made to diet, not to lifestyle, and therefore not veganism in its whole aspects. In this case it appears that the vegan diet is being discussed and with other findings it can be noted how it is being evaluated. In rank fourteen with a frequency of eleven the expression “bad for” indicates a negative attitude toward the vegan diet as it appears that veganism is regarded negatively in the texts of the anti-veganism English corpus. Another pair of words that characterises this collection of texts is “eat meat”. It can be noted that stress is made into eating meat as it represents the sense of belonging in which the people who created the texts are related to. Another interesting finding of the analysis through the N-Gram tool is the presence of two expressions, which are positioned one after the other in the

software. The first one in position twenty-two is “we can” while the second one in position twenty-three is “we should”. It can be noted that there is quite large use of modal verbs in relation to veganism and its discussion. The two words together “against veganism” in position twenty-four, before the chunk of words “an animal” in position thirty-two denote a predisposition against veganism rather than the attitude of talking about animals and their condition. It should also be noted that the position in which the pair of words “a good” can be found, is position ninety-seven. This denotes the fact that little space is given to words that depict a positive view of veganism.

By increasing the N-Gram size to three some changes in the results can be noted.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	it s not	1	12	3
2	a vegan diet	2	11	2
3	i don t	3	8	1
4	arguments against veganism	4	6	1
5	to eat meat	4	6	3
6	it doesn t	6	5	2
7	that we should	6	5	1
8	but it s	8	4	2
9	conventional animal products	8	4	1
10	there s no	8	4	1
11	this is a	8	4	2
12	to eat them	8	4	1
13	we shouldn t	8	4	1
14	a lot of	14	3	2
15	against veganism it	14	3	1
16	and it s	14	3	3
17	animal products are	14	3	2
18	as much as	14	3	2
19	as much of	14	3	1
20	bad for them	14	3	1
21	but i don	14	3	1
22	click to tweet	14	3	1
23	don t think	14	3	2

Figure 8: N-Grams of the English anti-veganism corpus (three-Grams)

To begin with, in fourth position we can find the expression “arguments against veganism”. It is interesting to note that one of the first findings in AntConc is related to a discussion of veganism by giving arguments opposed to the pro-veganism ones.

Analysing the Italian pro-veganism corpus through the N-Gram tool some interesting elements can be observed.

It is in the second position that can be found the expression “una dieta”. It should be pointed out that in this case, as in the English pro-veganism and anti-veganism corpora, the main focus seems to be on the dietary part of veganism. However, just in fourth position the expression “di vita” can be found which can be seen as a reference to veganism as lifestyle. Therefore, it could be said that in this corpus both the dietary aspect of veganism and lifestyle appear to be different from the English version where lifestyle is not mentioned as frequently. The two words “gli animali” in fifteenth position could be an indication of the fact that what is being discussed are the reasons for going vegan, as going vegan for the animals is one of the main reasons for people who decide to follow this path. It appears also that meat is being discussed as it appears in position twenty-one, rank eighteen with a frequency of eleven in “la carne”. By trying to search words referring to meat and dairy alternatives no hits are found. The reason for this could be in the fact that little space is given to alternatives of meat and dairy products. Another reason could be the in the much lesser interest in those products by Italians while in the UK and USA these products are more present.

By increasing the N-Gram size to three no changes in the results can be observed as the first two expressions in order of frequency are “a base vegetale” and “stile di vita” meaning that both the dietary side of veganism and the lifestyle are being discussed as observed previously, with the N-Gram of size two. However, by changing the settings to N-Gram Size 4 it can be observed that the first two expressions are respectively “stile di vita vegano” and “uno stile di vita”.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	stile di vita vegano	1	15	3
2	uno stile di vita	2	13	3
3	dieta a base vegetale	3	12	2
4	una dieta a base	3	12	3
5	come sono diventata vegana	5	8	1
6	all età di anni	6	5	1
7	seguire uno stile di	6	5	3
8	a base vegetale per	8	4	2
9	i test sugli animali	8	4	1
10	a base di carne	10	3	3
11	aumentare il rischio di	10	3	1
12	cioccolato fondente con mandorle	10	3	1
13	concordano sul fatto che	10	3	1
14	emissioni di gas serra	10	3	1
15	esperti concordano sul fatto	10	3	1
16	fondente con mandorle intere	10	3	1
17	fu a base di	10	3	1
18	mandorle intere e quinoa	10	3	1
19	prodotti di origine animale	10	3	3
20	si tratta di un	10	3	2
21	un numero crescente di	10	3	2
22	a base di semi	22	2	1
23	a base vegetale potrebbe	22	2	1

Figure 9: N-Grams of the Italian pro-veganism corpus (four-Grams)

It is only in third position that the dietary aspect emerges through the expression “dieta a base vegetale”. It can therefore be said that the vegan lifestyle is discussed more than the dietary aspect. It should also be noted that the expression “i test sugli animali” appears in position nine. In this case it could be said that another aspect of veganism apart from the dietary one is analysed. In addition, by searching “alternative” on N-Gram tool for the Italian pro veganism corpus the two first results are: “alternative gustose e nutrienti” and “alternative vegane alla lana”. These results once again show the fact that both dietary veganism and the lifestyle connected to it are discussed.

By analysing the anti-veganism Italian corpus through the N-Gram tool some interesting results were found. It was observed that the first result given by the software is “dieta vegana”.

It can be said that also in this corpus the main topic discussed is the vegan diet and not the vegan lifestyle as a whole. Also the second result indicates the fact that the diet being discussed as “la dieta” and indicates that the dietary aspect of veganism is being debated. The result “di avocado” in position twenty-seven by frequency is an interesting outcome as it indicates that much space is given to the discussion of food. Other results that indicate discussion about food are “di quinoa” and “glia anacardi” in position forty-eight and fifty-two by frequency respectively. It is interesting to point out that by searching “stile” in the software only two results come up and “stile alimentare” seems to be the most interesting one as it denotes that no lifestyle is discussed while food and dietary choices are largely talked through. Also by searching the word “vita” in order to get a clearer view of how lifestyle is discussed brings interesting results. The expression “vita animale” appears only one time in the corpora. It can therefore be said that fundamental aspects of veganism such as the life of animals are not discussed.

It is by increasing the N-Gram size to three that interesting results appear.

	Type	Rank	Freq	Range
1	la dieta vegana	1	19	2
2	allunga la vita	2	16	1
3	dieta vegana non	2	16	1
4	non allunga la	2	16	1
5	vegana non allunga	2	16	1
6	rispondere ai vegani	6	14	1
7	la vita la	7	9	1
8	vita la dieta	7	9	1
9	gabriele rosso il	9	7	1
10	rosso il post	9	7	1
11	gli onnivori non	11	4	1
12	la scelta vegana	11	4	1
13	per questo motivo	11	4	1
14	vegani rispondere ai	11	4	1
15	ai vegani che	15	3	1
16	ai vegani rispondere	15	3	1
17	di carne e	15	3	2
18	di origine animale	15	3	2
19	di questo tipo	15	3	3
20	il fatto quotidiano	15	3	2
21	la cucina etica	15	3	1
22	le stesse probabilità	15	3	1
23	lo stile di	15	3	1

Figure 10: N-Grams of the Italian anti-veganism corpus (three-Grams)

It is confirmed that the main aspect in the corpus is the dietary aspect of veganism as “la dieta vegana” is the first result. By maintaining the N-Gram size to six and searching the word “vegani” some interesting results came up. The expression “vegani più intransigenti” is meaningful because it denotes the belief for which vegan people are not considered condescending and open-minded. Another interesting expression is “vegani le proteine” as it indicates the stereotype for which vegans do not get enough protein or the proteins derived from plants are not good enough for the human body. Another expression that denotes some kind of stereotypical behaviour towards vegans is “vegani rischiano allergie”. It is clear that the vegan diet is seen as a harmful dietary habit as it is stated that vegans risk to get allergies. It should be pointed out that by searching the word “prodotti” no results such as “prodotti vegani” appear. This could be due to the fact that instead of expressions referring to vegan alternatives meat is discussed as the expression “prodotti animali”, which clearly shows the fact that animal-derived products are taken in consideration while no other expression beginning with the word “prodotti” is referred to plant-based options. It should however be pointed out that the word “tofu” appears in five expressions and therefore it can be said that at least some consideration is given to plant-based products.

By increasing the N-Gram size to six it can be noted the expression “la dieta vegana non è sostenibile”. This is a particularly interesting expression as the vegan diet is being criticised on the basis of sustainability.

3.5 Collocates of the most frequent terms

By looking at collocations of the most frequent terms some interesting results can be found as it is helpful for language analysis to look at words occurring before or after the searched word to discuss how they are used in a certain context. For example, by searching the word “vegan” on the English pro-veganism corpus two words stand out. The first one is “diet”. It is interesting to note that the word “diet” appears mainly to the right with a frequency of seventeen while the second hit, “children” has a balanced frequency to the left and to the right of the word searched being four to the left and five to the right. It is also interesting to look at likelihood as the word “diet” has a likelihood

of 53.631 while the word “children” shows a likelihood of 25.560 meaning that this word is less close to the word searched.

By searching the word “meat”, four hits are showed. The first result, “eat”, has a frequency of thirteen to the left while it does not appear to the right of the word searched. The second result, “eating”, has a frequency to the left and to the right of five for both. It is interesting to note that the -ing form attached to the word “eat” changes completely the results of the frequency to the left and to the right. Also the likelihood seems to change as the word “eating” seems to be less close to the word searched with a likelihood of 18.563 in contrast to the word “eat” with a likelihood of 36.959. The word “dairy” is the third result showed by the software with only results of frequency of five only to the right and a likelihood of 16.616. The word “why” shows an even lower likelihood with a level of 15.178 and a frequency to the left of four and a frequency to the right of two.

It is also by searching the word “children” that some interesting results are shown by the software. The first hit is “vegan” with a frequency to the left of five and a frequency to the right of four. The word “diet” being the second hit in order of likelihood has a total of 20.717 level while the word “vegan” has a likelihood of 35.726. It should be noted, however, that the frequency of the word “diet” appears more frequently to the right of the word searched as it has a frequency to the right of five in contrast to a frequency of two to the left.

Searching the word “product” in the Collocate tool for the anti-veganism English corpus produces four hits.

	Collocate	Rank	FreqLR	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1	supporting	1	1	0	1	1	11.315	9.453
2	renewable	1	1	0	1	1	11.315	9.453
3	consumers	3	1	0	1	1	9.878	8.453
4	means	4	1	0	1	1	8.023	7.132

Figure 11: Collocates of the English anti-veganism corpus

The first, “supporting”, has a likelihood of 11.315 and the second result, “renewable”, has just the same likelihood. This is interesting because it denotes the fact for which different words show the same likelihood level to the word searched. The third result, “consumers”, has a likelihood of 9.878, rather less than the other two results. Also the fourth result, “means”, shows a lower likelihood: 8.023. It should therefore be argued that

the word “product” is much more likely to be followed by words such as “supporting” and “renewable” rather than from words like “consumers” or “means” in the English anti-veganism corpus.

The word “animal” returns “products” as the first collocate with a likelihood of 53.408. This is interesting because it reveals the fact that the word “animal” in this corpus is strictly connected to the word “products”. It can therefore be said that much space is given to discuss the animal the role of animal-derived products in the texts analysed. By searching the word “fish” in the Collocate tool it can be noted that the first word is “dairy”. This word, with a likelihood of 15.348 seems to have less likelihood level to the word “fish” in comparison to the words that have been discussed above even if this is the first result given by the software. It is also interesting to note the last result given by the software which is “steak”. This word has a likelihood of 9.878 and therefore is not close to the searched word. It can also be said that in terms of meaning the words “fish” and “steak” are not very similar.

Searching the word “veganism” in the software the first word that comes up as a result is “against”. This word appears only at the left of the word searched and has a likelihood of 46.556. It can be said that this word is more used before the searched word than words such as “necessarily”, “arguments”, and “healthier”. It should also be pointed out that the word “healthier” has both less total frequency than the other results and also less likelihood with only 16.324. It should also be noted the words “necessarily” and “arguments” seem to have a near level of likelihood with 24.151 and 21.950 even if the two words are not similar in terms of meaning.

It is also useful to look at the pro-veganism Italian corpus through the Collocate tool as some interesting results are shown. For example, by looking up the word “vegano” the first two words are related to veganism as a lifestyle as the results are “stile” and “vita”.

	Collocate	Rank	FreqLR	FreqL	FreqR	Range	Likelihood	Effect
1	stile	1	19	16	3	3	90.307	4.718
2	vita	2	20	18	2	4	67.930	3.721
3	uno	3	12	11	1	3	42.635	3.853
4	diventare	4	9	7	2	5	34.345	4.055
5	dello	5	4	2	2	2	19.283	4.792
6	seguire	6	5	5	0	3	17.278	3.792
7	cioccolato	7	5	3	2	1	16.373	3.654
8	ritter	8	4	2	2	1	14.840	3.984

Figure 12: Collocates of the Italian pro-veganism corpus

It should be noted that both words are largely used on the left of the word searched rather than on the right. However, there is a difference between the two words in terms of likelihood as the word “stile” has 90.307 of likelihood and the word “vita” only 67.930. Another interesting result is the word “diventare”. The software shows that also in this case the word is mostly used on the left of the searched word with a frequency on the left of seven and a frequency of two to the right. It can therefore be said that the searched word “vegano” is mostly used on the right of expressions containing this word.

By searching the word “burger” the software creates two results with the same likelihood of 12.183, “sembrano” and “bovini”. It can be noted the fact that these words seem to not be related to the meaning of the word searched. However, the word “bovini” in the same expression with “burger” seems to deal with non-vegan food even if the corpus is composed by texts that provide information, opinion and general thoughts about veganism mostly by vegans. It could be argued that non-vegan related topics are being discussed.

The word “pesce” presents interesting collocates. The collocates “carne”, “latticini”, “latte”, “uova” are all related in terms of affiliation as these words are all related to food. It should be noted that there is no mention to some kind of vegan alternative to fish. It could be argued that there is no stress on vegan alternatives to fish while non-vegan products along with “pesce” are being discussed. It should also be noted that the words “latticini” and “latte” have both the likelihood level at 14.788. The reason for this could be the fact that the two words are very similar in terms of meaning.

It is interesting to note that when searching the word “opzione” in the Italian pro-veganism corpus the first result is “insalata”. It is interesting to note this result as there

seems to not be any reference to vegan alternatives to meat or dairy products. Also by looking up the word “latte” the results “uova”, “derivati”, “pesce”, “arachidi”, “guscio” do not seem to be related to vegan alternatives to dairy milk as it would be expected by looking at a corpus that is expected to contain references to vegan products such as dairy alternatives.

By putting the word “dieta” in the corpus it can be observed that both the words “vegana” and “vegetale” occur. Both results appear to be mainly on the right side of the searched word. However, the word “vegana” has a likelihood of 61.423 while “vegetale” has a likelihood of 43.686. It can therefore be said that the word “vegana” in relation to the word “dieta” is more used than the word “vegetale”. It can be argued that some difference is made between the expressions “dieta vegana” and “dieta vegetale”. In addition, the expression “dieta vegana” seems to have a larger use in contrast with the expression “dieta vegetale” as the total frequency of the first expression is twenty-three while the frequency of the second expression is fourteen.

Also the word “carne” gives interesting results when searched in the Collocate tool. It is interesting to note that two results “eliminare” and “bovina” have the same likelihood of 17.078. However, the two words seem to have quite the opposite behaviour in terms of where the words are in relation to the searched word. The word “eliminare” appears to be placed on the left of the word searched while the word “bovina” is placed on the right.

Focus should be made on the results that come up when the word “vita” is searched. The first result, “stile” has a likelihood of 102.729 which is very high.

It is very interesting to note that when searching the word “vegano” in the anti-veganism Italian corpus no hits are found. On the contrary, by searching the word “vegana” some results can be found. It is very interesting to note that the result “dieta” is used twenty-six times in total while the word “scelta” is used only seven times. It can be argued that the vegan lifestyle is much less discussed than the dietary aspect of veganism. In addition, the word “dieta” has a likelihood of 81.316 while the word “scelta” has a likelihood of only 16.185.

It is by looking up the word “carne” that interesting results come up. It can be observed that the results are mainly related to the topic of food as shown by the words “latte”, “pesce”, “rossa”. In addition, it can be observed the fact that all these words appear to be on the right of the searched word as frequency to left is very low. On the contrary, when

looking up the word “moderato” in the Collocate tool it can be observed that the result made by the word “carne” appears to the right while the second result, “consumo” appears only to the left of the word searched.

It can be said that in the pro-veganism English corpus much space is devoted to the discussion of the dietary aspect of veganism while in the pro-veganism Italian corpus the stress seems to be rather on veganism as a lifestyle. On the contrary, in the anti-veganism Italian and English corpora it seems that veganism as a dietary aspect is discussed as part of vegan lifestyle is not being mentioned and veganism is labelled as not healthy.

3.6 Analysis of some pieces of texts

After using the Keyword tool maintaining the target corpus and the reference corpus it is useful to have a look at how certain words are used returning to the KWIC tool. For example, by having the results created by the Keyword tool with the pro-veganism English corpus as target corpus and anti-veganism corpus as reference corpus, it is interesting to have a look at the use of the word “vegan”. It seems that in the pro veganism English corpus the word “vegan” is followed by words that are related both to the dietary aspect of veganism and words that are mainly related to lifestyle as in the words “fish”, “burger”, “products”, “beauty”. It should however be pointed out that the words that follow “vegan” are for the majority related to food in this corpus.

By looking at the word “milk” in the results of the KWIC tool related to the pro veganism English corpus it can be noted that the words that precede “milk” describe which type of plant-based milk is referred to as for example do the words “coconut”, “oat”, “almond”. It can therefore be said that to refer to vegan alternatives to dairy milk words describing in detail which the type of milk are used. The expression “plant-based milk” does not seem to occur very often. However, the expressions “plant milk” and “plant-based” milk do exist and are used even if not as often as it could be expected. Plant-based alternatives to dairy milk are not the only ones cited in this corpus. Even if with less frequency, there are references to dairy milk as it is being discussed the role of dairy milk in diet. Also the expression “animal milk” seems to occur. However, it is barely used and therefore does not seem to be used with high frequency in this collection of texts.

The word “taste” that comes up as a result in the Keyword tool is an interesting word when analysed in the KWIC tool. It seems that the first hits are related to the characteristics that come along with taste, such as “appearance”, “look”, and “texture”. By sorting the results to the left of the word searched it appears that some of the words that come just before are “meaty” and “nostalgic”. These are interesting results as it can be pointed out the fact that veganism is not related to cancel flavours or textures but, in some way, tries to replicate those flavours that are present in an omnivore diet without everything that comes with the production of meat and animal derivatives that are, of course, not accepted in a vegan diet.

By having a closer look at the word “animals” that comes up as a result of the Keyword analysis of the anti-veganism corpus as the target corpus and the pro-veganism corpus as the reference corpus some interesting results can be observed. For example, it can be seen that many times this word is followed by “and”. This means that different elements are being attached to the word “animals” such as “earth”, “eating”, and “we”. By sorting the results to the left it can be observed that space is given to topics such as farming and the role of animals in agriculture. Some examples are the expressions “humans and the animals”, “eating of animals”, “the sentience of animals”, “well-tended farm animals”, and “killing and eating animals”. It can be argued that in the anti-veganism English corpus stress is on the role that animals have in our everyday life as the word “animals” is the first result in the Keyword tool with a quite high frequency in the target corpus.

When having a close look at the word “arguments” it can be noted that many hits have as words following “arguments” the expression “against veganism” and other expressions beginning with “against” such as “against meat” and “against veganism”. It can therefore be said that much space is given to discuss issues with veganism as veganism is, in this case, being scrutinised and discussed in order to get a broader idea of the arguments that can be brought up against veganism. By sorting the results to the left, it can be seen that stress is on the ethical side of veganism as the words “moral” and “powerful” show that ethics is being discussed.

By looking up the word “lives” the results seem to come up with the idea of the life ending as the examples “lives are ended”, “lives are temporary and involve pain and grief” show. It should also be pointed out that there are also expressions in which the concept of life seems to be the opposite as the expressions “lives should be continued” and “life

should be started” are related to concepts like the continuity of life rather than its ending. By sorting the results to the left the expression “ethically raised animals’ lives” is part of what is being argued in the anti-veganism English corpus. Also the reference to food chain can be seen as a representative of what is being argued in this corpus. In this case it can be noted that there is reference also the dietary aspect of veganism while on the results that have being discussed above the ethical part of veganism was the main topic.

Looking up the word “death” and its results it can be noted that only thirteen results are presented by the software. It should therefore be argued that little space is given to discuss the topic of death while the topic of life is widely discussed. The expression of “a good, clean death” seems to portray a rather idealistic type of death in which the consumption of animal derived products seems to be accepted. Also the expression “pain-free death” seems to refer to a kind of death in which animals seem to not suffer. Through this expression, the consumption of animal-derived products seems to be legitimised and, therefore, accepted.

It is also by looking at the results of the Keyword tool with the pro-veganism Italian corpus as target corpus and the anti-veganism Italian corpus as reference corpus that some words can be analysed more in depth in context. For example, the word “vegetale” seems to carry with itself a discussion about the dietary aspect of veganism. It can be said that expressions such as “cibo a base vegetale comporta sicuramente anche un vantaggio per la salute” and “una dieta a base vegetale potrebbe ridurre il rischio di sviluppare il diabete” relate to the benefits of the vegan diet. It can therefore be said that the main focus of the discourse about the dietary aspect of veganism is centred on the benefits that a vegan diet carries with it rather than with discussion about food and taste.

By swapping the two corpora placing the anti-veganism Italian corpus as target corpus and the pro-veganism Italian corpus as the reference corpus some interesting changes can be observed. For example, the word “avocado” carries with it the aspect of veganism with its dietary habits as in this case food seems to be much more present. However, the focus seems to be on the fact that it is not the most sustainable product and as it can be present in a vegan diet, it is being labelled as not one of the best choices for the vegan diet.

The word “etica” in the Keyword tool seems to be one of the most interesting results as it represents one of the most important factors that are scrutinized when discussing veganism. The word “etica” seems to be present in these texts in quotation marks. It can

be argued that the use of this word in quotation marks could be seen as a way to diminish the ethical aspect of veganism or to refer to it as if an ethical diet is not really possible to have.

CONCLUSIONS

The study presented in this dissertation has shown that in the English pro- and anti-veganism corpora the stress appears to be mostly on the dietary aspect of veganism. By contrast, in the Italian corpora not only dietary aspects of veganism are addressed but veganism is also illustrated as a lifestyle. In addition, as it seems that veganism is more accepted in the UK and USA rather than in Italy, it can be said that linguistic patterns such as the change of spelling in words related to food (e.g. “cheeze”, “cheezeburger”), especially in vegan alternatives is a signal of a change of attitude in relation to veganism. It can also be claimed that the stress on food products in the English corpora rather than on lifestyle might aim to intrigue people into veganism. A focus on veganism as a lifestyle seems not to get the same results, as in Italy veganism is less accepted than in the UK and the USA. It can therefore be said that the English language seems to currently have more success in promoting veganism than the Italian language as more people seem to be attracted by veganism in the UK and in the USA rather than in Italy. The focus on lifestyle that seems to prevail in the Italian language does not succeed in promoting veganism. Therefore, veganism seems to be less accepted and more criticised than it is in the English language. It can also be said that the lack in adaptation in the Italian language reflects the lack of adaptation to veganism in Italy. A different approach to veganism in the Italian language could contribute to changing the way in which veganism is regarded. It could therefore help people see veganism in a different and more positive way. In addition, a focus on food products could benefit the way veganism is seen as food is an aspect that is present in everybody’s everyday life. A lack of discussion of vegan alternatives could lead to a lack of vegan alternatives as they are not seen as a profitable payoff for the industry.

This study was conducted using a rather small corpus. Therefore, it would be useful for future research to use a bigger corpus in order to have a broader view of language. In addition, having a bigger corpus could help find more representative results. In this study only the English and the Italian languages were studied. It could be interesting to have a look at different languages to see how veganism is perceived in different cultures as well. It could also be interesting to explore the differences in the English language that occur in the UK and in the USA as in the two countries veganism is likely to be perceived in different ways. In addition, a study of the English language in the UK and in the USA

related to veganism could reveal the ways in which veganism is perceived in the two countries and get information about veganism as a cultural phenomenon in the two countries.

The present study was conducted using only the software AntConc, without employing other programs. Further research could explore other software or methods to analyse the use of language. The use of other methods of research could bring about different results and therefore add information about the use of the language in the promotion of veganism. Future research could also focus exclusively on the Italian language in relation to veganism in order to discover all the different changes that occur in the language when dealing with veganism. It could also be helpful to conduct research on texts that are neither clearly positive or negative when dealing with veganism. This would provide a broader view of how language deals with veganism when a neutral opinion is given. It could also be interesting for future research to focus on the language used by different brands in order to get results on how language is used when dealing with veganism in the marketing field as the use of misspelled words seem to represent a successful choice in catching the attention of vegans. A focus on differences in the language when dealing with the dietary aspect of veganism and its lifestyle could be interesting in order to find different patterns that appear in either one aspect of the language or others as it could be said that language partly influences the decisions of people and therefore, in this case, the decision to go vegan.

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RIASSUNTO

La definizione di veganismo data dalla Vegan Society rappresenta chiaramente ciò che si intende ad essere vegani. È altresì importante rendere chiaro che non esiste una definizione univoca di vegetarianismo dal momento che ne esistono molteplici versioni tra cui il vegetarianismo e il flexitarianismo. Le ragioni che spingono la persona a seguire uno stile di vita vegano sono variabili e vanno dal rispetto per gli animali, all'impegno per l'ambiente, e all'attenzione per la salute. La persona vegetariana è vista come colei che ha un approccio meno estremo di chi si definisce vegano. Il fatto che i vegani vengano visti come vegetariani estremisti porta a considerare negativamente il veganismo. Un approccio non giudicante da parte dei vegani nei confronti dei non vegani sembra giovare il rapporto tra essi.

Il veganismo è stato largamente preso in considerazione negli articoli di giornale. Si registra un ridotto numero di articoli che espongono il veganismo in maniera positiva dal 2015 in quanto molti sono gli articoli che espongono la scelta vegana negativamente includendo casi di malnutrizione e rischi di una non corretta alimentazione. Il fatto che il veganismo viene visto come la versione estrema del vegetarianismo porta con sé una serie di problemi dal momento che spesso chi segue lo stile di vita vegano viene criticato mediante stereotipi tra cui il concetto per il quale il cibo vegano non sia appetibile né salutare. Inoltre, le associazioni di vegani non vengono ritenute affidabili e vengono talvolta ridicolizzate.

Lo specismo, concetto criticato dai vegani per il quale si afferma che alcune specie animali vengano attribuite uno status di superiorità verso altre, viene spesso attaccato e ridicolizzato. Il concetto di vegafobia, ovvero la stigmatizzazione verso le teorie anti-speciste, è importante per comprendere il fenomeno per il quale il veganismo viene a volte ridicolizzato. Uno studio su post che ridicolizzano il veganismo sul social network Reddit mostra come falsi preconcetti vengano utilizzati a sfavore del veganismo.

Anche il concetto di mascolinità si presta al ragionamento sulla percezione del veganismo dal momento che spesso il veganismo viene considerato come una pratica che toglie mascolinità all'uomo dal momento che è considerato virile il consumo di alimenti di origine animale. Inoltre, il concetto per cui un uomo si priva di carne e derivati viene visto come un atto di demascolinizzazione e perciò il consumo di carne viene considerato uno degli aspetti più importanti nel concetto di virilità. Il concetto per cui il consumo di

carne sia obbligatorio come senso morale non è presente per gli individui di sesso femminile. Inoltre, a una donna che sceglie lo stile di vita vegano non viene attaccato il concetto di femminilità dal momento che al concetto di femminilità non viene fatto necessariamente ricorso il consumo di carne e derivati.

Alcuni blog di ricette propongono addirittura ricette che vengono considerate appropriate per entrambi i partner di sesso maschile e femminile dal momento che alcuni cibi vengono considerati idonei all'alimentazione maschile ed altri a quella femminile. I commenti agli articoli di questi blog espongono il fatto che molte volte le ricette che vengono proposte dai partner femminili vengano approvate dai partner maschili come se le ricette fossero a prova di entrambi i sessi. È anche importante riportare lo stereotipo per il quale agli uomini non piacciono le verdure e che devono dunque essere convinti a mangiarle. La preoccupazione per gli animali da parte di un uomo viene vista in modo negativo. Quando invece è la donna a pensare anche alla vita degli animali è vista in maniera positiva. Il motivo per il quale alla donna è concessa la preoccupazione per gli animali deriva dal fatto che alla donna vengono concesse emozioni che non vengono comunemente attribuite in maniera positiva all'uomo. La presenza di queste dinamiche tra individui di sesso maschile e femminile porta all'aumento di stereotipi di genere.

È interessante notare come la lingua si comporta quando si affronta il tema del veganismo. Per lo studio della lingua si può ricorrere all'analisi di un insieme di testi che prende il nome di corpus. Il corpus viene poi usato per l'analisi della lingua attraverso un software adatto. Con lo studio di un corpus si possono scoprire molti aspetti della lingua. Lo studio del corpus ha come base l'analisi della frequenza delle parole presenti al suo interno. Attraverso lo studio della frequenza si possono notare vari aspetti della lingua come, ad esempio, quanto spesso compaiano certi morfemi. Lo studio della frequenza dà origine a risultati che possono essere aspettati o meno. Ad esempio, si può constatare che in un dato corpus è presente una data frequenza di una parola mentre in un altro corpus il risultato può variare. Lo studio della lingua attraverso il corpus è utile in vari campi come, ad esempio, lo studio della lingua nei parlanti non madrelingua o anche nello studio della psicolinguistica, della fonologia, della morfologia, della sintassi, e della semantica.

L'utilizzo di software per lo studio dei corpus risulta anche essere utile nel caso in cui un insegnante ha bisogno di verificare la frequenza di un gruppo di parole prima di impiegarle nell'insegnamento della lingua. L'utilizzo di un software per l'analisi del

corpus è fondamentale. Per l'analisi presente in questa tesi si utilizza AntConc. Questo software permette di analizzare e comparare vari corpora usando diversi strumenti. Per l'analisi del corpus mediante l'utilizzo del software AntConc si creano quattro diversi corpora: due corpora in lingua inglese e due in lingua italiana con i testi divisi in modo tale da ottenere due corpora con testi con atteggiamento positivo verso il veganismo e due con atteggiamento contrario. È importante suddividere in questo modo i testi in modo da studiare le differenze che sono presenti nelle due lingue di studio. Attraverso l'analisi delle due lingue si possono notare le parole e le espressioni più o meno ricorrenti e il loro ruolo.

Usando lo strumento denominato KWIC vengono analizzate le parole che compaiono prima o dopo la parola cercata. È importante soffermarsi su come le parole si comportano in determinati contesti in modo da comprendere più a fondo il contesto stesso. Dall'utilizzo dello strumento KWIC si evince che nei testi in lingua inglese c'è uno spiccato accento sul tema del cibo mentre sui testi in lingua italiana sembra esserci maggiore enfasi nel veganismo come stile di vita. Usando lo strumento N-Gram si analizzano i gruppi di parole contenuti nei vari corpora. Anche in questo caso l'enfasi nei testi in lingua italiana sembra essere sullo stile di vita dato dal veganismo. Si evince inoltre che nel corpus in lingua italiana dedicato ai testi che discutono negativamente del veganismo viene discussa la dieta vegana. In questo caso si vede molto la critica verso l'alimentazione vegetale, inoltre, lo stile di vita vegano sembra essere criticato sulla base della sostenibilità.

Con lo strumento Collocate si analizza la frequenza con cui determinate parole compaiono prima o dopo la parola che si cerca nel software. È interessante notare come alcune parole compaiano più di frequente o meno in base a variabili come la posizione e la lingua in quanto l'ordine delle parole varia nella lingua italiana e in quella inglese. Si può notare come nei corpora con posizione positiva nei confronti del veganismo in lingua inglese si discuta della dieta vegana mentre nei corpora in lingua italiana si discute più dello stile di vita in generale. Al contrario, nei corpora con atteggiamento negativo nei confronti del veganismo sia italiani che inglesi si discute più dell'alimentazione che dello stile di vita.

Attraverso lo strumento Wordlist si può controllare la frequenza delle singole parole nei singoli corpora. Analizzando, ad esempio, la parola "nutrition" si evince che parole

come “nutrition” e “nutrizione” non sono molto usate mentre sembra comunque essere discusso l’aspetto della nutrizione nella dieta vegana.

È importante analizzare i vari corpora mettendoli a confronto mediante l’uso dello strumento chiamato Keyword. Con questo strumento si mettono a confronto i corpora con atteggiamento positivo nei confronti del veganismo assieme a quelli con atteggiamento negativo nelle due lingue. Si nota come nei corpora in lingua inglese i risultati siano collegati a parole dell’ambito della nutrizione e degli aspetti inerenti all’etica nel veganismo. Facendo lo stesso con i corpora in lingua italiana si possono osservare parole inerenti sia all’aspetto della dieta vegana sia all’etica. È importante però sottolineare come l’etica non sia discussa tanto quanto la dieta.

In conclusione, si può dire che nei corpora in lingua inglese sembra esserci più enfasi nella discussione riguardante il cibo e la nutrizione mentre nei corpora in lingua italiana c’è anche la presenza del tema dell’etica. Si può inoltre dire che la lingua inglese sembra essere più efficace nel promuovere il veganismo dal momento che il veganismo sembra essere più criticato nella lingua italiana. Inoltre, si può parlare di un mancato adattamento al veganismo nella lingua italiana rispetto a quella inglese. Dal momento che la lingua si trasmette alla cultura si può constatare il fatto la mancanza delle alternative vegane in Italia rispetto a tutte quelle presenti nel Regno Unito e negli Stati Uniti deriva anche dal fatto che il veganismo non è del tutto percepito in modo positivo nel linguaggio.