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## Constructing credibility through representations in the discourse of wine: Evidentiality, temporality and epistemic control

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### 1.0 Introduction

Knowledge about wine has recently acquired increasing importance in the Western world, an interest that continues to spread among financially prosperous countries all over the world (Silverstein 2003, McCoy 2005). Many of these international consumers rely on wine critics rather than information from producers to determine the quality of wine (Charters 2007), and the authority of critics has therefore increased concurrently with the spreading interest in wine among new consumers with little previous acculturation to guide their preferences. This is natural, given that deference for authority is an obvious way of shaping our understanding when we access any new domain of knowledge (Orrigi 2007:185–187).

In this paper, we explore the articulation of authority in the domain of wine epistemology through the investigation of wine reviews written by Robert Parker, who is considered the world's most influential wine critic. Parker's writing has been observed to have had an unprecedented effect on the way in which wines are consumed and talked about by aficionados in the wine drinking community. The fact that Parker's recommendations are followed by so many consumers worldwide has even influenced wine production, since a favourable review by Parker can affect the wine producing estate's possibility to sell their wine on the more and more globalized wine market (McCoy 2006, Nossiter 2004). This phenomenon is referred to as Parkerization, which in essence means adaptation of the wine to Parker's preferences, and has been noted to occur particularly in prestigious Bordeaux, where the world's most expensive wines are produced (see for instance Langwiesche 2000, McCoy 2005, Nossiter 2004). According to the background story (see for instance McCoy 2005), Parker is particularly noteworthy as an authority in the domain of wine, because he was raised on Coca-Cola in Maryland, USA, which means that he lacks wine acculturation as a natural part of his upbringing, and because he lacks formal training in wine tasting. Instead, his reputation as a wine critic relies heavily on his allegedly superhuman capacity to recognize and memorize smells and tastes, which, perhaps surprisingly, has never been officially tested. Parker is particularly noteworthy as a present-day rhetorician, because he is not only the world's most influential wine critic, but has also been considered the most potent critic of all categories. In Langwiesche's (2000) words, "[T]he most influential critic in the world today happens to be a critic of wine".

Parker's unique power position in the discourse community of wine motivates this linguistic study, which highlights aspects that contribute to the construction of credibility in his wine reviews. The aim of our enquiry is to demonstrate in detail how modality surfaces across a range of formulations in the wine reviews. We argue that modality is not necessarily connected to specific linguistic expressions but may surface across a range of surface forms. In addition, we see modality as intimately bound up with the notions of temporality and evidentiality, all of which contribute to the construction of credibility in discourse. While staged against the backdrop of the discourse community of wine, we see this instance of persuasive discourse as representative not only of wine reviews but

more generally of discourse that succeeds to construct credibility in the particular domain where it occurs.

## 2.0 Wine epistemology and the wine review genre

In order to explore the construction of credibility in persuasive discourse, it is necessary to understand the context in which it is staged. Section 2.0 therefore provides a brief outline of the activity of wine tasting and touches on the more general significance of wine critics' recommendations in the world of prestigious wine.

The wine tasting procedure involves highly complex interactions of sensory perceptions that are related to the requisites and limitations of the human senses. In the tasting situation, the senses are ordered hierarchically so that one can smell the wine without tasting and feeling it, but one cannot experience the taste and mouth-feel without simultaneously smelling the wine. Professional wine tasting relies on the human senses according to a certain pattern. Gluck (2003) describes the wine tasting event as follows:

You pour out the wine. You regard its colour. You sniff around it. You agitate the glass to release the esters of the perfume and so better to appreciate the aro-mas, the nuances of the bouquet. You inhale those odoriferous pleasantries, or unpleasantries, through the chimney of the taste, the nostrils (the only access to the brain open to the air) and then you taste. You swill the liquid around the mouth and breathe in air so that this liquid is aerated and experienced by up to ten thousand taste buds. The taste buds are arranged in sectors of differently oriented cohesion: one designed to recognize salinity, another alkalinity, another sweetness and so on. They connect with the brain which in turn provides the sensory data, memory based, to form the critic's view of what s/he is drinking. Some of the wine is permitted to contact the back of the throat, but only a small amount is permitted to proceed down the gullet, so that the finish of the wine can be studied. Then the wine is ejected and several seconds are left to elapse whilst all these sensations are studied and written up as the impression the wine has left is mulled over (Gluck 2003:109).

The tasting event thus includes five stages: First of all, the visual impression of the wine is considered, second the taster concentrates on the smell of the wine, the nose, and third, the taste and mouth-feel are evaluated. Stage four concerns the "internal" olfactory stage where the wine's aftertaste is assessed, and finally stage five deals with the finish, i.e. how the wine vaporizes.

The visual experience is in a super-ordinate position compared to all the other senses, since the color of the wine can be observed without interference of other sensory input. Physiologically, vision is also known to be our most consistent source of objective data about the world. Herdenstam (2004: 60) points out that as much as one third of the brain is occupied by the interpretation of visual information, while only 1 % of the brain's capacity is dedicated to smell, and the senses of smell and also of taste are associated with much more subjectivity than vision. Smell is noted to appeal to emotions, but to simultaneously be an elusive phenomenon from a cognitive point of view (Classen et al.1994:2–3). Zucco (2007:161) notes that communication among humans about olfactory perception is complicated by the fact that people are conscious of smells only when these are present: It is not possible to retrieve olfactory stimuli from memory, since olfactory representations are not conceptual, merely perceptual. This characteristic of the sensory apparatus dates from primate evolution, when humans began to exchange olfactory perspicacity for enhanced colour vision (Goode 2007:81).

However, wine epistemology involves considerably more than perception of immediate sensory experiences. In order to evaluate the quality of the sensory impressions, the immediate experience needs to be related to an understanding of the relation between the sensory experience and the ways in which the wine has been made in terms of for instance choice of grape composition, place of growth and chemical procedures. According to Smith (2007:48, 68–69), it is possible for a taster with refined and discerning perceptual capacities to obtain objective information about the wine by paying careful attention to particular aspects of the olfactory and gustatory sensations that the tasting experience gives rise to.

In addition, in order to issue a consumption recommendation, which is the prime objective of wine reviews, it is also of fundamental importance to be able to predict how the wine will develop and whether its future quality will meet the consumer's expectations. This is of particular importance for the world's most prestigious wines from Bordeaux, which are well-known for their extensive life-span. Considerable investments are made in so called Bordeaux Futures, wine which is bought while still in barrel waiting to be bottled. Wine reviewers' predictions, in particular those issues by Parker, play a significant role in the pricing of these wines in the sense that a review from Parker has the power to make or break an estate's economy, because the price of the wine is fixed based on the critic's assessment (Gasparotto & Saverot 2012).

A wine review may address all of the events that are mentioned above, i.e. the production event, the tasting event and the consumption event. This is illustrated in Table 1, which displays Parker's review of Château Trotteville divided into three parts based on the events dealt with by the text:

**Table 1** The review of Château Trotteville, Saint-Emilion, Bordeaux

PRODUCTION EVENT	TASTING EVENT	CONSUMPTION EVENT
<i>Kudos to proprietor Philippe Casteja, who has produced the finest Trotteville I have tasted. A blockbuster effort,</i>	<i>the 2005 boasts an inky/blue/purple color along with aromas of creme de cassis, blackberries, truffles, fruitcake, and toasty oak. Pure and full-bodied with significant extract, tannin, acidity, and alcohol, this stunning wine</i>	<i>should be very long lived. Anticipated maturity: 2012-2030+.</i>

In the data that we have used for this investigation, consisting of 200 reviews of Bordeaux and Rhône wines written by Parker, it is worth noting that the tasting event stands out as central, since it is addressed in all of the 200 texts. For a description of the database and the sample under investigation, see Hommerberg (2011: 77–80). The consumption event is referred to in 90% of the texts, while references to the production event occur in approximately 60% of the reviews.

### 3.0 Representation of events in wine reviews

Regardless of discourse domain, a fundamental aspect of our approach is to understand and highlight a number of general requisites which are distinctive of the events that a text represents. Before we explore in detail how Parker's texts manage to induce credibility in the representation of the particular events addressed in the reviews, we will begin by laying bare the general requisites that underlies our interpretation of the data. The requisites that will be of most crucial importance in the current study are participants and activity, space and time, source of evidence and mode of knowing, the two latter notions based on Cornillie's (2009) distinction. It should be made clear that these general requisites are understood to distinguish the represented events even in the absence of overt textual markers. Table 2 provides a schematic overview of these requisites.

**Table 2** General requisites of the events addressed in wine reviews

EVENTS	PRODUCTION	TASTING	CONSUMPTION
PARTICIPANTS	Wine producer and wine	Wine taster and wine	Unknown consumer and wine
ACTIVITY	Wine production	Wine tasting	Wine consumption
SPACE	Local space (place of production)	Here	Unknown space
TIME	Past	Now	Future
SOURCE OF EVIDENCE	External sources	Writer's perceptual organs	Intricate system of inferences based on production, tasting, previous experiences
MODE OF KNOWING	Hearsay	Direct visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile perception	Expectation

For the production event, the space is local, the event is staged in the place of wine production. The time frame is past with respect to what is understood to be the text's now: the tasting event. The information can be understood to emanate from external sources, since it is unlikely that Parker himself has participated in the production. The basic mode of knowing underlying representations of the production event can be established as hearsay. The tasting event is the texts' here and now. It can be assumed that the source of evidence is the writer's perceptual organs and that the mode of knowing is direct visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile perception. Since the consumption event deals with the future, the space is unknown. The source of evidence on which references to ideal future drink time is based is presumably an intricate system of inferences based on production information, the perceptual experience of the wine and previous experiences of similar wines. The mode of knowing can be captured by the term expectation. In the following, we will zoom in on the representation of each of these events in Parker's reviews and relate the events to the representation of them, exploring facets of the representation that confer credibility on Parker's texts.

### 3.1 Representation of the production event

The majority of the reviews in our dataset are initiated by the representation of the production event, which is illustrated in Table 1. In the real world course of events, the production of the wine necessarily precedes the tasting of the wine. Consequently, the reviews in which the presentation of factors that contribute to the resulting quality of the wine precedes the description/assessment of sensory perceptions can be said to be iconic in the sense that the organization of the surface form of the message reflects the real world ordering of events.

We also find reviews where the representation of the production event is fused with the representation of the tasting event, a phenomenon that the following examples illustrate:

- (1) The whites include a big, sweet, pear, mineral, pungently aromatic 2004 Hermitage blanc. A blend of 65% Marsanne and 35% Roussanne, it offers abundant quantities of honeysuckle and hazelnut notes...
- (2) The finest Certan de May in many years (*thanks to the intervention of famed wine consultant Michel Rolland*), the dense purple-colored 2005 exhibits notes of camphor, creosote, plums, black cherry liqueur, currants, licorice, and pain grille.

In (1) the wine's aromatics, presumably perceived during the tasting event, are alluded to before the mentioning of the composition of different grape types, which relates to choices made during the

production process. In (2) a general evaluation of the wine's quality compared to other wines from the same estate is given before reference is made to the oenologist that was responsible for the production of the wine, a process that necessarily must have taken place before there could be any judgement of the wine's resulting quality.

As indicated by Table 2, the production-related component of the wine review text can be seen to provide a reconstruction of events that took place in the past from the perspective of what is taken to be the texts' now, namely the description of the tasting event, which will be further explored in Section 3.2. For the readers to accept the speaker's statement about a past situation, it needs to be perceived as credible and relevant with regard to the issue that is being debated. A rhetorician out for persuasive success therefore needs to exploit available linguistic resources to establish the connection between the past and the moment of speaking. In view of the assumption that tense is the default device provided by language to locate a statement with respect to time, it is worth observing that the past tense is only used occasionally in the representation of the production event. Instead, if the representation at all involves grammatical markers anchoring it in the past, the perfect is more frequently used, which the following example illustrates:

- (3) ...this tiny garagiste operation *has fashioned* a provocative blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc with 13+% alcohol.

Although the perfect, just like the past tense, locates the state of affairs in the past, the choice of the perfect over the past tense is of rhetorical importance: According to Fairclough (2003:152), the perfect differs from the past in that it involves a link with the moment of speaking. While the past tense merely locates the described event in the past, the perfect indicates that this event had some result that is relevant from the perspective of the speech time. The contrastive effect of the past tense is illustrated in the constructed example below:

- (3a) ...this tiny garagiste operation *fashioned* a provocative blend...

As pointed out above, it is of importance for the audience's acceptance of the speaker's statement about the past that they interpret it as relevant in regard of the issue that is being debated. One of the linguistic devices drawn on in the dataset reviews to accentuate this is thus the perfect. Another strategy that is frequently employed and which allows the writer to avoid the use of tense completely is ellipsis. Example (4) illustrates an elliptic construction where a link is drawn between the representation of the production event and the tasting event by means of a joint grammatical subject:

- (4) *A blend of 85% Merlot (from 70-year old vines) and 15% Cabernet Franc*, it exhibits aromas of white chocolate, espresso roast, sweet blueberry and raspberry fruit...

Through the shared subject (*it*), this elliptic construction establishes a connection between the preceding element, i.e. the reference to the grape varieties that were used to produce the wine, and the wine's aromatics as they are perceived during the tasting event, which is understood to be the text's now. The constructed example (4a) below illustrates that although the pronoun (*It*) still invokes a connection, the link is nonetheless considerably weakened when the passage is divided into two separate clauses:

- (4a) Les Asteries is a blend of 85% Merlot and 15% Cabernet Franc. *It* exhibits aromas of white chocolate, espresso roast, sweet blueberry and raspberry fruit...

While there is an infinite number of details pertaining to the production process that could potentially be included in the representation of the production event, we can expect a selection to be made on the basis of what is deemed most relevant from the point of view of the writer's experience of the present quality of the wine. The production-related information also functions to bestow credibility on the perceptual experiences that are portrayed in the representation of the tasting event. In our dataset, the

most frequently mentioned factors in the representation of the production event are the person responsible for the production of the wine, i.e. the producer or consultant oenologist, and the composition of different grape types that the wine was made from. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in the vast majority of the occurrences in the data set where the wine makers or producers are mentioned, their proper names are used. Proper names have been noted to have the rhetorical function of reinforcing the stability of the person that is being talked about (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:294, Perelman 1977:116). In addition, an accompanying epithet has been observed to further stabilize the construction of a person. Example (5) exemplifies this phenomenon in Parker's texts:

- (5) No one in Bordeaux has made greater progress in taming the extraordinary potential of this noble terroir than *Alain Vauthier, an obsessed perfectionist if there ever was one*.

It is not unusual that the portrayal of these protagonists is complemented by a description of actions that they have performed or are performing. In (5), for instance, Alain Vauthier is reported to have been "taming the extraordinary potential of this noble terroir". Examples (6)–(7) provide further illustrations of the promotion of the producer as an important factor in the representation of the production event:

- (6) Proprietor Patrick Maroteaux, president of Unions des Grands Crus Classes, *is pulling out all the stops* to make Branaire as alluring as several of the Leovilles and Ducru Beaucaillou...
- (7) Young Stephan Chabard *is trying singlehandedly* to resurrect the image for sparkling wines from St.-Peray.

It is worth taking note of the use of the present progressive in these occurrences, which has the function of conceptualizing the producers' hard work as an on-going activity that is not delimited to the production of the particular wine that is being reviewed. All these aspects contribute to the construction of these characters as heroes in Parker's texts. In this respect, Parker's writing can be said to contribute to transference of legitimization from the authority of inherited institutional traditions to the authority of persons with expert skills. According to Mueller et al. (2009), such legitimization is of importance in the eyes of consumers, since it bestows the product with what they refer to as 'credence'.

Another frequent type of information provided in the reviews' representation of the production is the combination of grape types from which the wine was made. While delivered as purely factual information, the presentation of the component parts that go into the blend reinforces the presence of these parts (Perelman 1977:99), encouraging the audience to focus on the exact proportions of different grape types included in the blend:

- (8) Bellevue is *a blend of 52% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 15% Petit Verdot, and 3% Carmenère*.

While studies on wine recognition have revealed that wine experts tend to base their identification of wines on grape variety (Solomon 1997), it is not likely that even the most experienced and discerning of experts should be able to come up with the exact percentage figures that Parker's texts include based solely on immediate perception. Although this is not overtly mentioned, a commonsensical interpretation is that the information included in the representation of the production event has been provided by the estate whose wine is being reviewed and/or accessed through other external sources. A few of the dataset texts provide cues to this effect, which is illustrated in (9) below, where the source of information is mentioned explicitly:

- (9) ...13% alcohol (*according to the proprietor, Madame Denise Gasqueton*).

The detailed representation involving exact numbers functions to signal that the information is not accessed via the writer's perception but instead via a report on the wine's production provided by the producer, even where the source of evidence is left implicit. In terms of Cornillie's three categories of modes of knowing, the evidence underlying the representation of the production event can be said to be based on hearsay, the source of the mode of knowing being external to the writer. Although hearsay is generally regarded as the least reliable source of evidence according to Viberg's (2001:1306) reliability hierarchy, the kinds of evidence on which the representation of the production event is based can nonetheless be understood to be incontestable, generally available facts that can be verified by a sceptical reader. Parker's representational choices can therefore be said to invite collaboration with the intended audience in the sense that they construe the prospective readers as a reasonable group, requiring verifiable evidence in order to be convinced.

### 3.2 Representation of the tasting event

We now proceed to consider the representation of the tasting event in Parker's reviews. As noted above, the part of the text devoted to the tasting event generally follows the representation of the production event. It is worth emphasizing that the rendition of the tasting event can be seen as central to the wine reviews in view of the fact that while the production and consumption events are not always addressed, the tasting event is referred to in all of the 200 dataset reviews. Example (10) below illustrates the representation of the tasting event in the dataset reviews:

- (10) Its inky/blue/purple hue is accompanied by scents of blueberries, white flowers, and black currants. Deep and rich, with a wonderful minerality, abundant nuances, fresh acidity, and stunning concentration...

As illustrated by this text, the representation of the tasting event involves in turn the visual impression of the wine, i.e. *inky/blue/purple hue*, the olfactory impression, which is captured by means of the expression *scents of blueberries, white flowers, and black currants*, and the gustatory input represented as *deep and rich, with a wonderful minerality, abundant nuances, fresh acidity, and stunning concentration*. It is worth noting that the ordering of the presentation follows the stages of the tasting event (see Section 2), beginning with the visual impression before moving on to the olfactory and finally the gustatory perception. The representation of the tasting event can therefore be said to be iconic, which has previously been observed to be a typical feature of the disposition of the wine tasting note (Silverstein 2003, Herdenstam 2004, Hommerberg 2010, 2011, Paradis 2010, Caballero & Paradis 2013, Paradis & Eeg-Olofsson 2013).

However, although all the stages of the wine tasting procedure are addressed in this particular instance, scrutiny of the entire data set makes it clear that this is not the case in all of the reviews: The wine's palate (taste and mouthfeel) is the sensory impression most frequently mentioned. References to the wine's gustatory impression appear in 95% of the texts. Instances involving the olfactory impression are found in 90% of the data set reviews. References to the visual impression of the wine are less frequent: only about 50% of the reviews include a report concerning the wine's appearance. It is also worth noting that while descriptions of the wine's nose as well as portrayals of the wine's palate can occur by themselves, thus making up the entire representation of the tasting event, descriptions of the wine's appearance only occur together with one or both of the other components.

In terms of time and spatial location, the representation of the tasting event is understood to make up the texts' 'here' and 'now'. An exploration of the dataset shows that this aspect is grammatically marked by means of the present tense in 197 of the 200 texts, which is illustrated by the following example:

- (11) The 2005...*exhibits* a deep ruby/purple color along with notes of sweet, mineral-laced black cherries...



The present tense can be seen as the default device used by speakers of the English language to locate a statement in the here and now. According to Langacker (2009), the use of the present tense entails conceptualization of the situation that is being described as coinciding with the time of speaking, a phenomenon that he associates with the concept of epistemic immediacy, i.e. mentally experiencing present-time states and events in terms of epistemic control (Langacker 2009:202). In a similar vein, Brisard (2002:265) argues that the English present tense relies either on direct perception of a state of affairs, coinciding with the time of speaking, or on generality: a state that is always present “out of time”. Fairclough (2003:152) refers to this phenomenon as the “timeless present”. Consequently, we take the use of the present tense in Parker’s representation of the tasting event to have the communicative potential to draw the intended reader into the describer’s perceptual experiences, since the direct perceptions are presented as if they coincide with the speech event as well as with when the text meets the reader, thereby making the space–time construction universal. It is worth taking note of the fact that the writer thus makes use of the resources made available by the English language in order to conceptualize the tasting event as a shared experience, or put in Tindale’s terms ‘a common cognitive environment’ (Tindale 2004).

As observed by Thibault (2004), a typical feature of what he refers to as the genre of the tasting note is a high degree of ellipsis, and an element that is frequently elided in portrayals of the tasting event is in fact the finite verb. As a result, renderings of the tasting event are often untensed. The following example, which is taken from the British wine magazine *Decanter*, provides an illustration of this phenomenon:

- (12) Dark ruby. Deep. Precise notes of fruit and spice. Complex and inviting. Dried plum character and a nutty, savoury palate.

Just like the representation of the tasting event that was reproduced in (10) above, the review from *Decanter* also follows the stages of the wine tasting ritual, i.e. the rendering of the visual impression (*Dark ruby. Deep.*) is followed by a depiction of the wine’s smell (*Precise notes of fruit and spice. Complex and inviting.*) and finally the gustatory observations are reported (*Dried plum character and a nutty, savoury palate.*). The exclusion of the finite verb nonetheless makes this text different from the rendition reproduced as (11).

Although Thibault’s (2004) analysis suggests that genre-aware readers automatically infer a present tense finite form of the verb *be* to complement such elliptic instances, this inference nonetheless requires a cognitive effort on the part of the audience, while Parker’s presentational strategy requires no such effort. Instead, unless they make a conscious attempt to uncover the fact that what is being described is a snapshot of the writer’s personal perceptual experience at some specific moment in the past when the tasting event took place, readers are likely to be drawn into the shared writer/reader experience that the text sets up, since the present tense evokes a state that is always present, out of time, as a stable component of our conception of reality (Brisard 2002, Jaszczolt 2009). In other words, the formulation suggests that the addressees will have the same experience of the wine if/when they taste it (and every time they taste it) since the qualities are presented as permanent attributes of the wine (Hommerberg & Paradis 2010a, 2010b). The generality effect of the simple present can be illustrated by rephrasing the example above in the present progressive:

- (11a) The 2005...*is exhibiting* a deep ruby/purple color along with notes of sweet, mineral-laced black cherries...

Just like the simple present, the progressive also portrays the state of affairs as being directly available to the speaker at the time of speaking. The progressive does however not carry the implication of generality that goes with the simple present. The choice of aspect is therefore of rhetorical significance for the construal of the tasting event as a joint writer-reader enterprise.

According to Thompson (2004:54) it is important to examine the validity claims made by writers/speakers because this is an indication of the ways in which they achieve their purposes, i.e.

negotiate with or manipulate their audiences. Fairclough (2003:164) proposes that such epistemic commitments made by writers are important aspects of how they express their textual identities. Following Thompson and Fairclough, we see the use of the present tense in Parker's texts as a persuasive strategy employed by the writer to convince his audience about the acuteness of his descriptions. This aspect of the text contributes to the construction of an authoritative textual persona as well as a world view according to which the properties of the wine are stable irrespective of taster and tasting situation. In other words, the description is conveyed as a general, timeless truth.

In contrast to the *Decanter* text and many wine reviews from other sources, Parker's texts are always tensed, and in the vast majority of the representations of the tasting event in the dataset reviews (197/200), it is the simple present tense that is used. Our scrutiny of the dataset reveals only one occurrence of the past tense, which is reproduced below:

- (13) ...the 2003 Crozes-Hermitage blanc from Albert Belle *was* acidified, tart, and green.

This example involves a clearly negative assessment of the wine. The past tense functions to express epistemic distance (Langacker 2009), i.e. the perceptual event is presented as a remembered 'now' rather than a 'now' that is directly accessible to the speaker at the moment of speaking. From this perspective, the impression is that the responsibility that the speaker is prepared to take for the validity of the statement is restricted to a specific event in the past, i.e. if tasted at another specific moment, this wine may well give rise to a different experience.

In addition, this use of the past tense also has the communicative potential to direct the audience's attention away from the state of affairs that is being described, thereby depicting it as unworthy of their attention. An examination of the use of tense in representations of the tasting event in 1000 reviews from *The Wine Advocate* shows a handful of occurrences where the past tense is used, all of them occurring in texts with negative orientation, which (14) and (15) illustrate:

- (14) There is not much to get excited about here. The 2003 Côtes du Rhône Villages *was* clipped and shallow.
- (15) The 2004 Crozes-Hermitages *was* of average quality with high acidity, vegetal personality, and little texture or concentration.

Viberg (2001:1295), who has studied perception verbs specifically, distinguishes between the following types: Experiencer-based verbs, which are further subdivided into Activity (Peter smelled the soup) and Experience (Peter smelled garlic in the soup), and Phenomenon-based verbs (The soup smelled of garlic). There are no clear occurrences of the Phenomenon-based type, i.e. 'the wine smelled of black currants'. However, (16) below could perhaps be taken to illustrate the Experiencer-based type, although the Experiencer has been omitted.

- (16) Tremendous purity (a hallmark of this vintage), full body, moderate tannin, and superb freshness and precision *are found* in this stunning Cotes de Castillon.

In the entire dataset, there are only two occurrences which allow for the reconstruction of an implicit Experiencer, either by means of the addition of a by-phrase, i.e. *are found by the wine taster* or by transforming the passive clause into a corresponding active clause, i.e. *the wine taster finds...* However, still according to Viberg (2001:1294), it is not unusual that situations are described without any indication of the perceptual source. This is clearly the presentational technique preferred by Parker, which is illustrated in (17) – (22).

- (17) Sensual and disarmingly charming, the dark ruby/plum-colored 2003 possesses superb fruit in the nose along with a big, sweet candied black cherry attack...
- (18) ...this wine offers sweet cherry and currant fruit

- (19) The deep ruby/purple-tinged 2003 reveals an evolved, precocious bouquet displaying this cuvee's tell-tale minerality...
- (20) ...the 2005 [...] boasts super intensity, a deep, full-bodied, powerful palate, silky tannin, beautiful purity, a fragrant perfume, and a mineral-laden backbone with moderate tannin.
- (21) Aromas of crushed rocks, sweet cherries, dried herbs, and notions of raspberries and blacker fruits jump from the glass of the 2003 Canon-de-Brem.
- (22) Deep, sweet black currant fruit interwoven with smoky herb, graphite, and licorice aromas emerge from this delicious, supple, fleshy 2003.

Except for the two occurrences of Experiencer-based perception verbs exemplified by (16) above, it is a characteristic feature of Parker's texts that the tasting event is construed as taking place without the participation of the writer, i.e. "the description is made independent of the describer" (Potter 1996:150). This way of depicting reality has two rhetorical functions: First, it draws attention away from the fact that what is reflected in the text is a subjective impression of reality. Second, it engages the recipients in placing them in the same position as the writer in the role as remote sensors (Potter 1996:150). The persuasive power of this type of description lies in the fact that it rules out alternative descriptions. Yet, according to Potter (1996:98, 106), a description can always be 'otherwise': "any description counters a range of alternative descriptions".

The presentation in the descriptive-evaluative unit has been found to adopt a God-like, omniscient perspective. There is no indication of the mode of knowing or source of evidence on which the generic, temporally unrestricted descriptions are based. If an effort is made, based on our world knowledge, we can nevertheless infer that the qualities that make up the descriptions have been revealed by the writer during the tasting event, i.e. the presentations are reconstructions of the impressions that the wine has made on his senses of vision, smell, taste and mouthfeel. If we compare the evidence provided in the representations of the tasting event to the formulations used to reconstruct the production event, we find a number of differences which can be seen as indicative of the fact that the information provided in this thematic unit has been accessed via sensory perception rather than through external sources. As observed in the preceding subsection, the representation of the production event includes numerous occurrences of exact renderings (e.g. *14% alcohol; 6,500 cases produced or a blend of 58% Cabernet Franc and 42% Merlot*). Instead of providing such exact specifications, the representations of the tasting event are less determinate. For the visual impression, we find the following type of renditions:

- (23) *Its inky/blue/purple hue* is accompanied by scents of blueberries, white flowers, and black currants.

In addition to colour worlds like *blue* or *purple*, which denote only the colour shade, *inky* can also be seen to refer to the clarity of the wine's appearance, suggesting opaqueness. Alongside this type of colour definitions, the colour descriptions in the data set also occasionally draw on associations with gemstones (*ruby* and *garnet*) to capture the appearance of the wine in terms of both colour shade and clarity. Except for *plum*, which occurs quite frequently as a colour descriptor in the dataset, fruit words are not used to designate the colour of the wines, despite the existence of a great variety of berries and fruits in different nuances that would be appropriate for the descriptions of wine colour.

The type of colour specifications provided in representations of the tasting event can be contrasted to The Natural Color System (NCS), which has been developed for objective communication about colour nuances, providing a technical code for each nuance in the spectrum. Drawing on this system, it would be possible to capture for instance the degrees from brick red to purplish red as follows: S3060–Y90R (brick red) – S3060–R20B (ruby/purple) – S3060–R40B (inky/blue/purple). Such technical renditions are however avoided in Parker's texts, which confirms

the idea that the evidence is based on a human experienter perspective rather than a report based on technical evidence provided by an external source.

While fruit words are not made extensive use of in the colour descriptions, they are pervasive in the representations of the wines' smell. In the majority of the dataset reviews that include a reference to the wine's smell, these depictions are instantiated in terms of more or less elaborate lists of physical objects referring to aroma as well as bouquet:

- (24) Its inky/ruby/purple color is followed by sweet aromas of *spring flowers interwoven with black cherries, cranberries, cassis, plums, and hints of forest floor, wet rocks, and new oak*.

All of the items included in the characterization of this wine's aromatics are physical objects with relatively stable spatial properties. However, it is conceivably not the visual characteristics of these objects that are being drawn on but instead another property, namely their smell. As observed above in relation to the descriptions of the wines' appearance, the scientific terminology of chemistry, which provides exact formulae to describe odour components, for instance 1-octen3-ol, is however avoided in the representation of the tasting event. This feature of the presentation confirms that it has been provided by a human experienter rather than registration of chemical properties assisted by technical equipment. According to Todd (2010:54) chemical terms are unhelpful in the communication of perceptual experiences.

In the vast majority of the data set texts, the disposition of the representation of the tasting event follows the sequencing of the wine tasting procedure so that the gustatory impression of the wine is presented after the visual and olfactory impressions. As mentioned in Section 2, the gustatory dimension involves not only taste but also the touch of the wine against the tongue and palate as well as its weight in the mouth, i.e. what is referred to as the wine's body. In addition, the gustatory stage also involves an internal olfactory dimension, the so called aftertaste, as well as the finish, i.e. the wine's vaporization after it has been swallowed/ejected. It is however often difficult to determine which of these gustatory dimensions are being addressed by the linguistic items used in the depictions of the tasting event.

An overall observation is that the default representation of the gustatory impression of the wine is different from the portrayal of the wine's olfactory dimension in that it draws more clearly on scales of presence of the invoked qualities from high to low degrees of presence. This phenomenon is signalled linguistically by reliance on adjectives or adjective-noun combinations rather than lists of nouns denoting physical objects, which were observed to be the preferred option for the portrayal of smell. Examples (24) and (25) provide illustrations of this feature of the gustatory descriptions in the dataset:

- (24) Deep, full-flavored, muscular, textured, and rich with light to moderate tannin in the finish, this lavishly rich, full-bodied effort...
- (25) ... combination of huge richness, incredible tannin levels, record breaking alcohol levels, and very good acids.

Lehrer (1975, 1983, 2009) has established several scales that are relevant for the description of wine taste: Acidity (from sour to flat) Sweetness (from cloying to dry), Astringency (from hard to soft) and Body (from heavy to light). Good wines are supposed to display a balance of these gustatory dimensions, in which case tasters perceive the wine as harmonious. According to Lehrer (2009:165) there is however a lack of general reference norms when scalar judgements about wines' gustatory properties are made, and how we perceive the interrelation of these dimensions is a consequence of our educational as well as personal backgrounds.

Throughout this outline of the representation of the tasting event in the dataset reviews we have indicated that the evidence underlying the presentations is based on the writer's sensory experience, a feature that distinguishes this part of the text from the representation of the production event, where the evidence is taken to be provided by external sources. In terms of Cornillie's (2009) divisions, the

mode of knowing can be understood to be direct perceptual evidence, even if there is no indication of this in the text. Cornillie's division involves a distinction between visual and sensorial evidence. The mode of knowing of sensorial evidence can be further subdivided into olfactory, gustatory and tactile perceptions. The modes of knowing of visual and sensorial evidence have been considered in the construction of the reliability hierarchy of evidentials (Viberg 2001). The degree of reliability forms a hierarchy from the perceptual modality of vision, which is known to be more or less invariable across human beings, and so intersubjectively reliable, through auditory evidence to the perceptual modalities of smell, taste and touch, which are known to be most subjective and which are therefore regarded as less reliable sources of evidence, since they are not intersubjectively invariant. It should however be borne in mind that the credibility of Parker's wine descriptions is underscored by the widespread belief that his "sense of taste and smell must be extremely special" (McCoy 2005:141). Based on Parker's media image, it is therefore likely to be interpreted as a more reliable reflection of reality when Parker describes a wine as having the aromas of for instance camphor, creosote, plums, black cherry liqueur, currants, licorice, and pain grille than if another random wine consumer would say the same thing.

### 3.3 Representations of the consumption event

We will now consider the representation of the consumption event. Caballero (2007) suggests that the issuing of predictions in wine reviews may include references to prospective consumers, information about the wine's consumption span as well as a recommendation of dishes that are believed to go well with the wine. In Parker's reviews, the representation of the consumption event typically includes exclusively a reference regarding the wine's recommended consumption span, a specification that is provided in 90% of the dataset reviews. This specification, while providing information about the future development of the wine, can also be seen to entail a recommendation to the intended audience to actually take action and consume the wine during this period, an idea which is supported by the fact that negatively oriented reviews are not endowed with a drink time specification.

Paradis' (2009a, 2009b) investigations of the linguistic encoding of drink time recommendations in *The Wine Advocate* show that the information in this part of the review is normally delivered in one of three linguistic formats; as declarative constructions, as imperatives and in the form of noun phrases. In Paradis' (2009b) investigation, comprising 200 reviews of which 170 included drink time recommendations, 68% of the drink time specifications are declaratives, while imperatives make up 25% and noun phrases are rare, only occurring in 7% of the reviews selected for the investigation. While the ratio of noun phrases is slightly higher in the dataset investigated here, the distribution over linguistic constructions nonetheless displays similar proportions, the most frequent construction type being declaratives (61%), followed by imperatives (22%) and noun phrases occurring in 17% of the representations of the consumption event. The imperatives as well as the noun phrase constructions are illustrated in (26) and (27) below:

(26) Drink it over the next decade.

(27) Anticipated maturity: 2013-2026

Paradis (2009a) provides further subcategorization of declarative constructions, which shows that 28% of the declaratives are middle constructions, 32% are passive constructions and 40% are made up of other types of simple declaratives. These three categories are illustrated by means of examples (28)–(30), which are taken from the material that is currently under study.

(28) It should drink well for 5-6 years.

(29) ...it can be enjoyed over the next 10-15 years.

(30) It is [...] capable of lasting 15-20 years.

Comparing the results of the current study with Paradis' study, the proportions are relatively stable. Paradis (2009a), who concentrates specifically on the occurrences in the data of middle constructions, proposes that these constructions constitute the linguistic manifestation of the complex interpersonal nature of recommendations, i.e. that the speaker tells the addressee what to do for the benefit of the addressee rather than the speaker himself. In a similar vein, Lassen (2003:282) distinguishes between the directive types of 'demand', which is beneficial to the speaker, and 'offer', which is understood to benefit the addressee. Thompson (2004:47) proposes that the subtype of 'offer' has a strong tendency to be articulated by means of modalized expressions. In accordance with these ideas, it is worth noting that the imperatives are different from the other types of constructions occurring in the representations of the consumption event, since they can be seen to imply exclusion of the speaker from the group that is being addressed by the recommendation. The presupposed participant in the imperative can be made visible by means of the addition of a tag question (see Halliday & Matthiessen 2004:109), a testing method that is illustrated in (26a) below:

(26a) Drink it over the next decade, will you?

Alternatively we can add an imagined addressee's response to this directive as "Yes, I will" or "No, I won't". Noun phrases as well as middle constructions and other types of declaratives, including passives, are not suggestive of such a restriction, but position both the writer and the addressee in the same group as possible future consumers of this wine. Noun phrases such as (27) have no mood structure, and consequently do not enable the addition of tag questions or recipient responses. The declaratives in examples (28)–(30), however, can be tested by highlighting the Mood of the clauses in the following way:

(30a) It is [...] capable of lasting 15-20 years, isn't it? (Or alternatively: Yes, it is/No, it isn't)

Importantly, while the real world consumption event presumably involves the intended addressee of the reviews, the formulations used to represent the consumption event highlight a property of the wine rather than involving an active human participant. Van Leeuwen (2008:66, 2009:156) captures this phenomenon by means of the term 'deagentialization', which accentuates the idea that the linguistic construction represents actions as brought about in other ways than by human agency. According to Paradis (2009b:70), middle constructions are particularly useful for expressing recommendations: They can be seen as iconic in the sense that they foreground the Undergoer of the event (in this case the wine) and background the Actor (the potential future consumer).

A feature that distinguishes the representation of the consumption event from the representation of the production and consumption events is that the mode is irrealis since what is being dealt with is predictions of the future, i.e. events that have not yet taken place. All statements about the future involve an element of potentiality, i.e. just because something is possible or even likely to become true, there is still a chance that it may not (Jaszczolt 2009:33). Any representation of the future therefore involves restriction in epistemic certainty. For instance, the imperative constructions involve epistemic uncertainty in that the recommendation that they instantiate can be taken up or not by the audience to which it is directed. While the restriction in epistemic certainty can be taken for granted as a self-evident aspect of the fact that the texts deal with future time as well as unknown space, it is interesting to note that this is linguistically encoded in various ways in the dataset. In addition to verbs whose main function is to express epistemic modality, like *should* and *can* (see for instance (28) and (29)), the representation of the consumption also includes a number of other textual cues which are indicative of this restriction in epistemic certainty: The time specifications are often imprecise, which is illustrated above in (28)–(30). Further examples of such linguistically encoded restrictions in epistemic certainty are provided by (27), where the item *anticipated* emphasizes the uncertainty of the

future, and (30), where *capable* indicates that while the wine has the necessary requisites, there is no absolute guarantee that it will actually develop in the predicted way.

It is also of interest to consider the kinds of evidence that underlie predictions of the future. Based on our world knowledge, we can be rather certain that Parker is not in possession of a time machine that allows him to travel into the future and experience the quality of the wine with his senses in for instance 20 years from now. So how can credibility be achieved by Parker when he predicts the consumption span of the wines that he recommends? As observed above in relation to the representations of the production and tasting events, the majority of the formulations used to capture the consumption event lack overt markers of evidentiality. However, elliptic constructions are frequently employed, which connect the representation of the consumption event with the representation of the tasting event.

(31) Long, rich, and moderately tannic with surprising weight, it should drink beautifully for 7-8 years...

In (31), the description of the wine's taste and mouthfeel is textually linked to the prediction of its consumption span through the shared subject (*it*). The elliptic construction therefore functions as a clue suggesting that part of the evidence on which the prediction is based is derived from the tasting experience itself. In the constructed example below, the link between the tasting event and the consumption event is weakened:

(31a) Bolaire 2005 is long, rich and moderately tannic with surprising weight. This wine should drink beautifully for 7-8 years...

However, according to Derooy (2007:108–109), it does not result in sufficient credibility to base predictions about a wine's future development on the immediate experience that it gives rise to from the perspective of the present. This is because there are several different possibilities of future development of for instance a wine that is presently perceived as dull: It can either stay dull or it can evolve so as to provide a more, or even a very, pleasurable experience when it matures. In order for such predictions to be perceived as credible by the addressees, they need to rely on the writer to have some additional knowledge that is not exclusively derived from the particular experience at hand, but based on a capacity to compare the present experience to previous experiences with similar phenomena. Although there are no overt signals in (26)–(30) indicating that the prediction relies on inference-based knowing, other dataset reviews occasionally include evidential markers indicating inference from previous experiences, which the following example illustrates:

(32) *Based on previous vintages*, it will undoubtedly require 10-12 years of cellaring...

Although there are a few instances where explicit reference is made to previous experiences, in the unmarked case this information is left implicit. In these cases, the plausibility of the prediction rests on the audience's contextual knowledge about Parker's longstanding experience with other wines of the same type. According to McCoy (2005:116), Parker possesses precisely the kind of experience that is required in order for his audience to perceive his predictions as credible: "Parker's secret weapon was his ability to mentally compare the wine in front of him with all the other wines of the same type he'd ever tasted over the years", i.e. 10,000 wines a year for more than thirty years.

#### 4.0 Discussion

In Section 3, the goal was to provide examples of textual reconstructions of the three events given on the horizontal axis of Table 2, i.e. the production event, the tasting event and the consumption event, and to analyse the different parts in the light of how credibility is achieved. In this section, we shift the perspective to the parameters of the vertical axis of Table 2 and describe the most pertinent insights of

the above reconstructions from the point of view of temporality and spatial frame (4.1), modes of knowing and evidentiality (4.2) and participants, agentivity and deagentialization (4.3).

#### 4.1 Temporality and spatial frame

Based on world knowledge, it was assumed to be a basic requisite of the production event that it took place in the past with respect to the speech situation. It is however unusual that past temporality is textually encoded by means of a past tense verb. Instead, it is often left up to the reader to infer the temporal determination of the production event. A variety of different representational strategies are found in the representation of the production event, for instance the perfect as well as verbless extensions, both of which function to highlight the relevance of the presentation of past and local space-times for the immediate speech situation.

Normally following the representation of the production event in the texts' surface form, the representation of the tasting event stands out as the texts' here and now. In an over-whelming majority of the data set texts, a present tense verb serves the purpose of locating the presentation of the perceptual event temporally. The portrayal of the perceptual experience in note form without a tensed verb, which has previously been observed to be a characteristic feature of wine tasting notes (see Thibault 2004), is thus avoided. By means of the present tense verb, the reader is drawn into the writer's perceptual experiences, which are conceptualized as immediately accessible to the writer at the moment of speaking. In addition to creating shared attention, the present tense in these presentations functions to portray the described experiences as a situation that is always there, irrespective of taster and tasting situation, i.e. a universal truth. It therefore requires a conscious cognitive effort on the part of the addressee to conceptualize the described situation as a particular person's perceptual experience at a specific moment in time and space.

The surface form of the texts usually closes with a representation of the consumption event, often realized in terms of an estimation of the wine's ideal consumption time. A basic requisite of the consumption event is that it is temporally anchored in the future. This is realized by means of lexical as well as grammatical markers, which serve the purpose of locating the message in an epistemologically uncertain would-be reality and hence to decrease the degree of epistemic certainty with which the message is communicated.

The notion of temporality that is adhered to in the present study is not tied to specific items with temporal marking as their only function. Instead, in accordance with Fairclough's (2003:151–154) ideas of the representation of time and place, the intention has been to show that temporality can be left implicit to be inferred on the basis of contextual cues.

#### 4.2 Modes of knowing and evidentiality

The division of the dataset reviews into three parts, based on their representation of three different events, also involved a discussion of the different types of evidence underlying the representation. For analytical purposes, a distinction was made between the mode of knowing and the source of evidence. As point of departure for the discussion, we assumed that the evidence underpinning the representation of the production event is not based on the writer's personal experience from taking part in the production of the wine but on evidence that emanates from sources that are external to the writer, conceivably the producer. The mode of knowing can therefore be established as hearsay. While this phenomenon is only rarely realized by means of overt markers in the texts' surface form, the exploration of the material shows that the representation often involves detailed technical specifics, which correlates with the commonsensical idea that it is based on external sources and not a perceptual experience.

As pointed out in Section 3, the tasting event is fundamentally distinct from the production event in terms of evidentiality and modes of knowing. Based on contextual understanding, we



assumed that the mode of knowing informing the sensory descriptions is direct visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile perception and that the source of evidence is the writer's own senses of vision, smell, taste and mouthfeel. The representation of the tasting event was however not found to include overt markers, e.g. in the form of perception verbs, signalling the mode of knowing. Neither is there any explicit mentioning of the fact that the writer's perceptual organs constitute the source of evidence on which the information is based. The credibility of the sensory evidence is underscored by the widespread tales of Parker's extraordinary sensory capabilities, i.e. contextual knowledge that is not derived from the particular texts included in our dataset.

Finally, the part of the texts devoted to the representation of the consumption event has been found to rely on the mode of knowing of expectation. Based on contextual understanding, the assumption is that the source of evidence on which the expectation builds is an intricate system of inferences based on information about production-related aspects as well as direct sensory perceptions and wide-ranging previous experience with the development of similar wines. This is however rarely expressed overtly in the text. Contextual knowledge about Parker's activity as a wine taster as it is presented by the author on *The Wine Advocate* webpage as well as in the media helps to create credibility with respect to this mode of knowing.

#### 4.3 Participants, agentivity and deagentialization

The representation of the production event reveals a great deal of variation as regards the grammatical constructions that are used to present the information, involving a number of non-finite clauses that are grammatically linked to, and function as circumstantial extensions of, the constructions used to represent the tasting event. This strategy allows the presentation to be highly condensed, leaving implicit the production process as well as the participants. Where the process is realized in the form of a finite verb, action verbs with the wine producers in the role as strongly instigating agents stand out as characteristic of the representation of the production event.

Furthermore, the tasting event is most frequently instantiated as state rather than activity, despite the fact that the real world tasting event involves the taster as an active participant. In addition to typical state verbs, metaphorical expressions are found, where the wine or components of the wine perform a more or less personified role as agent. In other words, it is typical for the agentivity involved in the real world tasting event to be transferred from the human participant to the affected entity, i.e. the wine, in representations of this event. Representations of the tasting event therefore have a strong tendency towards deagentialization, which serves the rhetorical function of drawing the addressee into the described event as fellow experiencers.

Transferred agentivity was also found to be characteristic of the representation of the consumption event. Although the event that is represented by the text involves the future consumer of the wine, human participants are not represented in the texts' surface form. Instead, the action is transferred from the human participant, i.e. the future consumer, to the participant that is going to undergo the action, i.e. the wine, which is portrayed as performing a more or less active role in the future consumption event. The event is thereby deagentialized.

### 5.0 Conclusions

The exploratory exposition offered in this paper has strived to illuminate the construction of credibility in the discourse of wine through detailed study of a particular, extraordinarily influential individual's texts. The textual cues that have been brought up in the discussion justify a number of general conclusions regarding this critic's capacity to induce credibility among his readers. Parker can be understood to possess extensive practical wisdom, which contributes to the construction of credibility. Dissection of the perceptual experience into component parts, which was found to be a characteristic trait of the representation of the tasting event, highlights the writer's ability to make such fine-grained organoleptic distinctions, moulding a discursive persona of reliable expert taster. The credibility of the

detailed renderings of the tasting event is substantiated by the widespread tales of Parker's perspicacious senses of smell and taste, which are abundantly available as contextual information in numerous publications about Parker's outstanding olfactory and gustatory capabilities. While overt markers of evidentiality are generally not provided in the wine reviews themselves, the surrounding background story provides the source of evidence with ample credibility despite the fact that smell and taste perceptions in general are known to be volatile and inconsistent across humans. The portrayal of the tasting event in the investigated material procures a meticulous discursive persona dedicated to giving exact witness statements, not only about the sensory effects that the assessed wines have had on his acute perceptual organs, but also about the objective, taster-independent qualities of the assessed wines. Exact factual renderings of technical details about the wines' production contribute to moulding a scrupulous persona.

The representation of the tasting events as detailed, decomposed sensory witness statements depicted as being immediately accessible to the writer at the moment of writing places the audience in the same position as the writer in the role as remote sensors. The generalizing effect is achieved by means of deagentialization, i.e. transitivity patterns where the wine rather than the taster stands out as the more or less active participant, while the taster, whose sensory organs are conceivably experiencing the perceptions in the real-world tasting event, is eclipsed in the text. The conceptualization of the tasting event as a joint writer-reader experience is reinforced by means of linguistic resources such as temporal marking that functions to provide a representation of the wine that is stable irrespective of taster and tasting situation, thereby laying the foundation for shared reader/writer attention on, as well as joint enjoyment of/dissatisfaction with, the tasting experience.

The division into several olfactory components simultaneously endorses a particular conceptualization of a wine's smell, thereby encouraging the putative audience to share the writer's decomposed olfactory perceptions. The representational arrangement involving present tense verbs and transitivity patterns of deagentialization, which is employed by the writer to capture the tasting event, draws attention away from the fact that what is reflected in the text is an individual's subjective impression of reality at a specific moment in time. This type of depiction involves a validity claim that rules out alternative descriptions, elevating the writer's personal perceptual experiences to the status of universal truths.

While the dataset of wine reviews is the only aspect of the present topic that has been directly accessible for investigation, the presentation has continuously strived to show that in order to capture aspects that contribute to the construction of credibility, both explicit and implicit cues need to be taken into consideration. Increased knowledge about the topic has been acquired by relating the close analysis of linguistic forms to general world knowledge and specific contextual understanding. We conclude that it is only in the light of such extra-linguistic knowledge that we can arrive at satisfactory interpretation of the communicative potential of linguistic form.

The choice of material for this study is justified on the basis of the extraordinary influence that Parker has had as the number one guru of the wine world, whose reviews are known to have the potential to make or break prestigious wine estates by suggesting to consumers which wines they will want to obtain and consume. While the explorations undertaken in this study have thus been delimited to texts written by one single author in the discourse domain of wine, his status as the world's most influential critic of all categories (Langewiesche 2000) justifies the employment of this particular data as an instance of a more general phenomenon, namely how credibility in discourse is achieved. We argue that the model we have outlined and exemplified in this study is more widely applicable to any instance of authoritative discourse in which individuals identify themselves as having the right to exercise the power to lead others, be it politicians, management gurus, priests or consumer experts. In terms of analytic methodology, we also argue that the approach to the data presented in this paper provides a fruitful complement to other methodologies for discourse analysis. In Hommerberg (2011, submitted) the current approach to the analysis of representations functions to inform argumentation analysis, and Hommerberg & Don (forthcoming) reveal the importance of awareness of the general requisites of events in relation to analyses employing the Appraisal model.

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