



Negativity, medicalization and awareness: a corpus-based discourse analysis of representations of mental illness in the British press (2011-2014)

Gillian Smith

Methods

- Critical Discourse Analysis (Bloor and Bloor, 2007)
 - *limitations: small-scale, text local*
- Corpus methodology
 - *advantages: larger, more representative sample*

Data collection



SEARCH TERM	mental illness
WORD COUNTS	500 articles per newspaper (<i>3000 in total</i>)
	2037411 words
Sources	Tabloid: <i>The Mirror, The Sun, The Daily Mail</i> Broadsheet: <i>The Guardian, The Times, The Telegraph</i>
Time span	1 st January 2011 – 31 st December 2014
Corpus software	AntConc
Corpus methods	keywords and collocation analysis

Keywords analysis in a mental illness newspaper corpus

- **Medicalization**

disorder, patients, psychiatric, treatment, bipolar, medication, therapy, patient, schizophrenia, hospital, condition, disorders, care, nhs

- **Problems**

problems, suicide, stress, anxiety, death

RANK	FREQUENCY	KEYNESS (LL)	KEYWORD
12	1384	930.462	Disorder
15	1465	838.709	Patients
17	1778	716.766	Problems
22	848	604.979	Psychiatric
25	1355	584.075	Treatment
27	682	503.968	bipolar
28	926	503.104	suicide
33	601	425.169	medication
34	659	421.803	therapy
35	718	421.295	patient
37	554	415.527	schizophrenia
38	816	405.936	stress
39	1646	402.765	hospital
43	795	376.448	condition
44	494	360.053	disorders
45	1716	352.525	care
46	592	350.746	anxiety
47	1131	348.858	nhs
49	1277	342.436	death

Collocations and discourses surrounding 'mental illness'

- Collocate collection
 - *MI-score: >3 (Hunston, 2002)*
 - *span: 5 left/right*
 - *minimum collocate frequency: 10 times*
 - *semantic groupings*
- Key semantic/discourse groupings:
 - *Negativity*
 - *Medicalization*
 - *Awareness*

Negative behaviour/evaluation



- Negative evaluations
 - severity evaluations: *severe, serious*

Michael (name changed) suffers from a	severe	but undiagnosed mental illness
murder. "Her judgment was clouded by	severe	post-traumatic mental illness
had been suffering from	severe	depressive mental illness
people in crisis with	severe	mental illness
lives of patients with	severe	mental illness
ended up with years of	severe	mental illness and near-death exploits

his own death - show signs of	serious	mental illness.
into the treatment of patients with	serious	mental illness.
having no symptoms indicative of a	serious	mental illness.
efforts to eradicate the stigma of	serious	mental illness
blurred distinction between depression, as a	serious	mental illness, and feeling depressed.
"did not meet the criteria of	serious	mental illness,' he said

Negative behaviour/evaluation

- Violence

- physical violence: *violence, violent*

admitted a history of	violent	behaviour and mental illness.
a long history of mental illness and	violent	offending
despite a history of mental illness and	violent	behaviour.
many thousands who suffer mental illness and are never	violent	
other trauma to explain mental illness and	violent	behaviour
he has history of	violence	and mental illness
has no history of mental illness or	violence	, but
have a history of mental illness,	violence	and alcohol
where substance misuse, domestic	violence	and mental illness are

- violent impact: *sufferers, suffering, suffers*

. "One in four people	suffer	from mental illness at
five is likely to	suffer	a mental illness, sometimes
The 56-year-old is	suffering	from severe depressive mental
the number of people	suffering	from mental illness.
at Aberdeen Uni people	suffering	from mental illness cannot
against a woman who	suffers	from a mental illness,
one in four people	suffers	from mental illness
in four people who	suffers	from mental illness will

Negative behaviour/evaluation



- Addiction and abuse
 - *alcoholism*
 - *substance abuse*
 - *addiction*

outsiders. People suffering from mental illness, drug addiction and	alcoholism	
death of a child, mental illness or	alcoholism	in
as having many risks: mental illness,	alcoholism	, panic attacks.
clinic specialises in treating mental illness,	alcoholism	and gambling
a possible history of mental illness and	substance	abuse
longer-term problem is mental illness, expressed through	substance	abuse
the consequences of deprivation,	substance	abuse, mental illness, antisocial
, has a history of mental illness and	substance	abuse.
mortality, teenage births, drug	addiction	, mental illness, incarceration, social
backgrounds, low educational attainment,	addiction	and mental illness.
levels of substance abuse,	addiction	and mental illness here.
outsiders. People suffering from mental illness, drug	addiction	and

Medicalization

- Symptomatology

- *signs [of mental illness], symptoms [of mental illness]*

ADX, Powers had no history or	symptoms	of mental illness, but since being
as the most terrible and irrevocable	symptoms	of mental illness, of a balance
claimed he had learned to copy	symptoms	of mental illness while working as
doctors believe may have been faking	symptoms	of mental illness for years - was
an experienced psychiatrist as having no	symptoms	indicative of a serious mental illness
found him sane and showing no	signs	of mental illness.
again in court naked, was showing	signs	of mental illness when he broke
in Glasgow that he showed no	signs	of mental illness or disorder during
have suggested that the FBI ignored	signs	of mental illness while investigating him.
Frances first showed	signs	of the mental illness

- Treatment

from some form of mental distress.	Treating	mental illness may be expensive. Not
another part of the health budget.	Treating	mental illness costs the NHS \xA310
demons. The Priory clinic specialises in	treating	mental illness, alcoholism and gambling addiction.
the famous clinic, which specialises in	treating	mental illness, alcoholism and gambling addiction.
relying almost entirely on antidepressants to	treat	mental illness, giving patients little hope
use of cognitive behavioural therapy to	treat	mental illness, it has withheld approval
medieval Britain, doctors used walnuts to	treat	mental illness and headaches, believing that

Awareness

- *Stigma, discrimination*

a reduction of stigma and	discrimination	around mental illness
," by tackling stigma and	discrimination	d around mental illness and
Bill to end institutional	discrimination	against people with mental
are already tackling the	stigma	of mental illness
need to end the	stigma	of mental illness
opening up about mental illness helps reduce the	stigma	

- *Mind, Rethink*

- *Awareness, understanding*

it prompts a wider	awareness	of mental illness, then
great problems in raising	awareness	of mental illness is
have any borders." Wider	awareness	of mental illness was necessary
that he didn't	understand	mental illness. So let
destigmatisation of mental illness. Anything that increases	understanding	
of improvement in our	understanding	and treatment of mental illness

Conclusion



- Keyword analysis revealed the overall tone of mental illness reporting in the press as negative and clinical
- Collocate analysis allowed the identification of semantic preferences and therefore discourses surrounding the term
 - *the two major discourses (medicalization and negative evaluation/behaviour) were potentially damaging*
 - *the existence of the awareness discourse suggested understanding and some progress*