

# **Persuasiveness in the discourse of wine**

*The rhetoric of Robert Parker*



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**PERSUASIVENESS IN THE DISCOURSE  
OF WINE**

*THE RHETORIC OF ROBERT PARKER*

**CHARLOTTE HOMMERBERG**

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**PERSUASIVENESS IN THE DISCOURSE OF WINE. The rhetoric of Robert  
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## Abstract

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The primary purpose of this study is to explore a case of remarkably powerful contemporary rhetoric, namely Robert Parker's wine writing, which has had an unprecedented impact in the world of prestigious wine for more than two decades. Parker, an American autodidact who gave up his career in law to become a full-time wine critic, is considered the most influential critic of all time. This background motivates the approach of the current enquiry, which targets the persuasiveness in Parker's writing. The investigation strives to bring to the fore both explicit and implicit elements of his wine reviews that have the potential to contribute to rhetorical success.

The material selected for analysis comprises a corpus of reviews extracted from Parker's extensive bulk of wine writing. The texts are studied against the backdrop of socio-cultural and institutional frames. Considerable importance is assigned to the fact that the reviews occur within a strictly specialized field of discourse with a highly conventionalized configuration.

This hermeneutic enquiry approaches the topic from three analytical perspectives, designed to highlight persuasiveness in representations, argumentation and appraisal. The presentation reports on schematic patterns in Parker's discourse as well as close interpretation of individual texts. The analysis of representations shows that both visual and verbal representations contribute to the persuasiveness of the text. The argumentative exploration of Parker's discourse, which is assisted by the analytical tools of pragma-dialectics, demonstrates that the reviews involve rational argumentation on several subordinate levels, given in support of assessments and recommendations. Finally, the perspective of appraisal draws on the analytical resources provided by the Appraisal model to shed light on the way in which the audience is positioned to respond with respect to emotional, associative and perceptual values. The results indicate that the persuasiveness of Parker's discourse arises as a result of concordance among an intricate array of interrelated factors. The audience is recurrently demonstrated to play a crucial role as co-constructors of the message.

The present study also has methodological outcomes, presenting a novel combination of analytical methods to perform contextually situated discourse analysis. In addition, the material is allowed to challenge the theoretical ideas and notions that are addressed.

Keywords: *appraisal, assessment, critical discourse analysis, evaluation, persuasiveness, pragma-dialectics, recommendation, rhetoric, rhetorical argumentation, Robert Parker, text analysis, wine review, winespeak*



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*Charlotte Hommerberg*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Interest in wine has exploded during the past few decades, thus spreading to new groups of consumers. According to Caballero (2009:73), “wine is becoming a cultural icon in an emerging hedonistic sub-culture accessible to an ever larger number of consumers”. Gluck (2003:107) specifies the wine consuming part of the British population as having risen from 4 to over 70 per cent during the past 50 years. Both Lehrer (1990) and McCoy (2005) report on a similar development in the US. In Asia, interest in wine has escalated since the 1990s, concurrently with the rapid economic growth in many Asian countries. In Sweden, knowledge about wine is beginning to be regarded more or less as part of people’s general social competence.

Langewiesche (2000) suggests that this trend is due to “wine’s residual status as an elite drink”. According to Lehrer (1990:389), food and drink choices have always been “imbued with symbols”. Mennell (1985:331–332) observes that taste in food is historically one of the means by which members of a higher social class have distinguished themselves from those considered inferior. Silverstein (2004:643–644) argues that the world of prestige comestibles is currently in the process of becoming “a more and more authorizing one in the First World and its economically globalizing beyond” to the effect that consumers are subject to self-placement based on their articulated attitudes with respect to such elite comestibles. In a similar vein, Charters (2007:158) suggests that consumption choices can be seen as having symbolic values that function to “convey meaning both to ourselves, about the nature of our existence, and to those around us, sending messages about how we wish to be seen”.

The increasing interest in wine can be seen as part of a larger consumerist tendency in today’s society, which has accelerated towards the end of the last century (Stearns 2006:139). According to Stearns (2006:154) consumerism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is a highly complex phenomenon, which can function to blur identity and “help people deal with confusions about social status”. Stearns (2006:156–157) proposes that today’s globalized quest for some common types of items can be seen as a reflection of consumers’ desire to experience a sense of participation in a larger global community. Ethnological studies of Swedish consumption of beverages shows that overtly manifested consumption choices

are not based solely on personal preferences, but on the preference of the social group to which people aspire and wish to assert their membership (Sigfridsson 2005:229–230). Similarly, Bourdieu's (1984:56) sociological investigation addresses taste in terms of the capacity of manifested preferences to create group affiliation. Although ostensibly giving the consumer a sense of freedom and individual expression, the increased global quest for similar products has had a tendency to create growing convergence of shared goals in some areas which can lead to conformity of cultures (Stearns 2006:156–158).

While wine can be seen as an object of luxury consumption, many wine lovers hold that the appreciation of fine wine is first and foremost an aesthetic pleasure similar to the experience of art or music. If wine is understood as the expression of artistic craft, the perceptual experience that it can give rise to involves considerably more than either direct sensuous pleasure or confirmation of one's economical status of being a financially solid consumer. Approached as an artistic object, a fine wine may present an opportunity to appreciate a crafted work that is intentionally structured to reward such initiate appreciation. Compared to other artistic objects such as art or music, the aptitude for wine appreciation is associated with the refined sensory talent to relate to a complex perceptual experience involving four of the human senses: vision, smell, taste and touch. It is generally difficult for humans to reliably distinguish visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile impressions when the human senses are simultaneously activated. While smells and tastes are conceivably there to be detected, providing everyone with equal perceptual opportunities, the experience that the sensory impulses give rise to will nonetheless differ based on our different abilities to interpret what we perceive (Smith 2007:45). According to Todd (2010:173), background knowledge fundamentally affects our perception and appreciation of smell and taste and is hence of crucial importance in wine tasting. Todd gives the following account of enlightened wine perception:

When smelling and tasting with the right kind of knowledge and experience [...] we are truly representing the wine, and our taste experiences will constitute knowledge of it (Todd 2010:42–43).

Considering the intricacy of wine appreciation, how do consumers know which wines will meet their expectations? Since the choice and appreciation of wine can function to position consumers with respect to their social identity, many of today's consumers are reluctant to rely solely on their own taste preferences (Sigfridsson 2005:235–236). Instead, to look for guidance as to the perplexing supply offered on the wine market, many consumers consult the recommendations issued by wine critics to assist their choice of product. According to Charters (2007:157), due to the growing interest that new groups of consumers take in wine and the willingness of these consumers to trust the judgement of critics, the writing of wine reviews has developed into a profession in which people can earn money and in some cases even make a living. The reliance on the rec-

ommendations of such wine gurus is especially pertinent in countries which do not have a tradition of domestic wine production, while consumers in long-established wine countries tend to rely more strongly on producers than critics to provide the professional perspective (Charters 2007:159).<sup>1</sup> Given the increase of wine consumption in non-producing countries, the most important market for wine today is no longer the domestic population but other countries which do not make wine. This situation has entailed a shift in power relations from producers to wine critics, whom international consumers trust to recommend a successful consumption choice.

It seems that no-one has been more successful in the field of wine writing than Robert M. Parker Jr., who is said to be the world's most influential wine critic. In fact, Parker is considered the most influential critic of all times and in all categories, and it is claimed that through the expression of his taste, he is changing the way in which wine is made, a phenomenon popularly referred to as Parkerization (see e.g. Langewiesche 2000, McCoy 2005, Fiering 2008).<sup>2</sup> Surprisingly, Parker has no formal training in wine tasting and, perhaps even more surprisingly, grew up in a family where Coca-Cola was the preferred beverage. He promotes himself as a dedicated consumer advocate, a crusader, who uses his doglike olfactory capacity to help consumers distinguish good wine from bad. His adversaries however consider him to be a self-appointed wine dictator, who bases his wine assessments on skewed tastes and insufficient methods (Johnson 2005:40). Regardless whether they are opponents or supporters, no-one in the wine world denies that Parker holds an almost divine position as a leader for a generation of wine consumers.

## 1.1 PARKER'S ROLE IN THE WINE WORLD

Until the 1970s, wines used to be reviewed by writers who had close connections with the wine industry, which meant that the wines were promoted rather than critically assessed (Agostini & Guichard 2007). This system upset Robert Parker, a lawyer from Maryland, USA, who had the American consumer advocate Ralph Nader as his role model. Parker had no formal training in wine tasting, but had begun to take a serious interest in wine during a trip to Europe in the late 1960s, which was also when he discovered how his reputedly extraordinary olfactory and gustatory talents could be used for describing and assessing the qualities of wine (Langewiesche 2000). This is how he describes his gift for olfactory and gustatory recognition in Langewiesche's (2000) exclusive interview:

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<sup>1</sup> For instance the Guide Hachette in France, the Penin Guide in Spain and Platter's Wine Guide in South Africa present information about wine collected from producers.

<sup>2</sup> I note in passing that the term "Parkerization of wine" also appears as a Wikipedia entry, which suggests an established and well known phenomenon. The entry is available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parkerization\\_of\\_wine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parkerization_of_wine). Date of access 26 September 2011.

A wine goes in my mouth, and I just see it. I see it in three dimensions. The textures. The flavors. The smells. They just jump out at me. I can taste with a hundred screaming kids in a room. When I put my nose in a glass, it's like tunnel vision. I move into another world where everything around me is just gone, and every bit of mental energy is focused on that wine (Langewiesche 2000).

Parker's only commitment is to the consumer. He has no financial interest in the wine industry. He accepts no gifts or payoffs. His bimonthly wine magazine *The Wine Advocate*. *The independent consumer's guide to fine wine* includes no advertisements (*The Wine Advocate*. Wine Advocate writer standards). This attitude has secured an unimpeachable reputation in the wine world. Interviewed in Nossiter's film *Mondovino* (2004), Parker confirms that he has never compromised. He has always been true to his own instincts and preferences regardless of how his assessments might affect the livelihood of the people in the wine industry.<sup>3</sup>

Parker specializes in fine, expensive wines, i.e. wines that are primarily bought by wealthy consumers and collectors on a global market, and it is especially in Bordeaux, the world's most expensive wine area, that his assessment are said to have had the most profound influence (Agostini & Guichard 2007). Traditionally, the top value of Bordeaux wines has been associated with the Médoc district, a part of the Bordeaux region where the wines are based largely on the Cabernet Sauvignon grape. These wines have a transparent colour, they have a higher level of acidity and astringency, a lower percentage of alcohol and they mature slowly, qualities which have been considered "aristocratic" (Langewiesche 2000). The following depiction of one of the classical Médoc estates is reproduced by Bourdieu in his seminal work *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste* as an example of what has traditionally been considered the very definition of refined taste in wine:

The house is in the image of the vintage. Noble, austere, even a little solemn....  
Château Margaux has the air of an ancient temple devoted to the cult of wine....  
Vineyard or dwelling, Margaux disdains all embellishments. But just as the wine has to be served before it unfolds all its charms, so the residence waits for the visitor to enter before it reveals its own. In each case the same words spring to one's lips: elegance, distinction, delicacy and that subtle satisfaction given by

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<sup>3</sup> *The Wine Advocate* began to be published in 1978, initially as a newsletter titled *The Baltimore-Washington Wine Advocate*. It was unillustrated, packed with text and printed on buff-coloured paper (McCoy 2005:72). The first part of the name was dropped during the first year, and the publication was thereby made available for a wider readership. Parker abandoned his career in law and became a full time wine writer in 1984 (McCoy 2005:111). *The Wine Advocate* website was launched in 2001. Although the title of the page currently reads "Robert Parker's Wine Advocates", I will continue to refer to the magazine using its established name *The Wine Advocate*.



something which has received the most attentive and indeed loving care for generations. A wine long matured, a house long inhabited: Margaux the vintage and Margaux the château are the product of two equally rare things: *rigour and time* (Bourdieu 1984:53)

According to Langewiesche (2000), Bordeaux producers have previously been able to depend on the worldwide reputation of their wines' lineage, and have thereby been in control of the definition of taste to the effect that "anyone who disagreed [...] simply did not know wine". Parker, however, is not impressed by long-standing traditions, lineage and nobility, but declares his position as follows:

What I've brought in is a democratic view. I don't give a shit that your family goes back to pre-Revolution and you've got more wealth than I could imagine. If this wine's no good, I'm gonna say so (Langewiesche 2000).

According to Langewiesche (2000), Parker is a revolutionary because he overrules the traditional French wine hierarchies, relying on a simplified classification based on his own judgement. Todd (2010:124) proposes that Parker is legitimizing a new, more flexible Bordeaux category, where wine is no longer judged with respect to its traditional category constraints.

It has been claimed that Parker's taste in wine is strongly biased (e.g. Langewiesche 2000, Johnson 2005, McCoy 2005). When it comes to red Bordeaux wines, he prefers alcoholic, Merlot-dominated wines with a dense, dark colour, lots of ripe fruit extracts, the taste of new French oak and soft tannins, a style of wine that is taken to provide the consumer with the best value for money from an independent consumer advocate perspective. According to Parker's many critics among the traditionalists, the wines he prefers are "simplistic" and "plebeian", displaying the kinds of tastes that appeal to the "untutored palate" (Langewiesche 2000). Wine merchant Steve Browett, interviewed by McCoy, agrees that "Parker has the taste of the common man" (McCoy 2005:253).

Regardless of what preservers of Bordeaux traditions might think, Parker's influence has led to a situation where the traditional hierarchy of wine taste has begun to crumble and a new hierarchy is beginning to form: In order to sell on the ever globalizing wine market, many wine producers have chosen to adapt to Parker's new hierarchy of wine taste and modify their production process so that the resulting wine appeals to his preferences. This can be achieved by means of new techniques, which have spread throughout Bordeaux and the rest of the wine making world. As a result, the taste of wine is said to have lost its original individuality and identity, its 'sense of place' or 'soul' (Fiering 2008, McCoy 2005). This phenomenon is sharply criticized in Nossiter's documentary *Mondovino* (2004). Among the critical voices is an aging producer of Burgundy wine, Hubert de Montille, who describes Parker's influence as nothing but a new version of American imperialism. In a similar vein, American wine

importer Joe Dressner, interviewed by McCoy (2005:289), says apropos of Parker's venture that he has become "a proponent of wine styles that wouldn't exist without him".

According to Langewiesche (2000), part of Parker's success in influencing consumers lies in the directness and authenticity of his voice, his "unique ability to communicate his opinion". It has been observed that Parker's tasting notes stand out for their "no-nonsense, just-the-flavors-ma'am approach" (Steinberger 2007a) and are perceived as "prose so plain and clear that it reads like a subway map" (Langewiesche 2000). Orrigi (2007:194) characterizes Parker's texts as "simple", "synthetic" and "easy to understand". These quotations indicate that Parker has been successful in generating the impression that he is speaking "not artificially but naturally", which according to Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1404b) is a sign of proficient rhetoric.<sup>4</sup>

Furthermore, McCoy (2005:273) reports on an experiment carried out by wine maker Michel Chapoutier, which confirms that Parker's language stands out from other wine critics': When the informants (friends and wine people) were asked to match anonymous tasting notes to the wines that the notes described, few scored better than 25%. However, although they were not able to match his descriptions with the corresponding wines, nearly everyone correctly identified the tasting notes that had been written by Parker. This may in part be due to the fact that his texts reflect two characteristics that McCoy (2005:298) summarizes as follows: "sheer enthusiasm and delight in wine" and "the certainty that one is right".

As an overall remark, McCoy characterizes Parker as having "the zeal of a missionary" (2005:68). Similarly, Johnson (2005:43) describes Parker's reviews as having "the ring of authority". These depictions of his authorial character are not incidental, but correlate with the image projected by *The Wine Advocate's* logo: a corkscrew intentionally designed to resemble a crusader's cross (Langewiesche 2000). In *Mondovino* (Nossiter 2004), the wine producer Aimé Guibert from Languedoc, France, compares Parker to a pied piper with a very simple tune that goes like this: "What I like is good, what I like the most is the best."

This section has provided a reflection of how Parker's influence has been portrayed in the media so as to give an idea of the amount of power and controversy that has come to be associated with his wine assessments. According to McCoy (2005:297), "many people have devoted time to thinking about [Parker], judging him and developing theories about the reasons for his power and success". This investigation provides yet another perspective on the Parker phenomenon, the essence of which will be specified below.

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<sup>4</sup> When Aristotle's *On rhetoric* is cited in this study, reference is made to verse number. It is Kennedy's translation from 2007 of Aristotle's work that has been consulted.

## 1.2 AIM, RESEARCH QUESTIONS, DEFINITIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

The aim of this enquiry is to provide a systematic account of how Parker's rhetoric emerges from his tasting notes published in the online version of *The Wine Advocate*. Rhetoric is understood here in accordance with Aristotle's influential definition as the "ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion" (*On rhetoric*. 1356a). In order to achieve this aim, my investigation seeks answers to three overarching research questions.<sup>5</sup>

- How does the text mould Parker's discursive persona in terms of identity and relations?
- How does the text position the audience in terms of identity and relations?
- Which world view is evoked by the text, and how is this world view conjured and sustained?

Parker's position as a colossus on the wine arena provides the motivation for this enquiry. The study takes as point of departure the idea that Parker's rhetoric represents an occurrence of successful persuasion, i.e. the desired outcome of an intentional persuasive activity. In the present case, available contextual information about Parker's discursive activity makes it clear that a persuasive intention can be taken for granted (see section 1.1). Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:25) argue that it is not uncontroversially perceived as ethical to always succeed, or even have the intention to succeed, in persuasion. For rhetoric to be persuasive, speakers therefore need not only be good at persuading but must also be understood by the audience as saying what is good. The successful end result of Parker's discursive endeavour is realized in terms of a noticeable influence on consumption preferences in a worldwide community of consumers of fine wine, who rely on Parker's recommendations to warrant the appropriateness of their consumption choices.

According to van Eemeren & Grootendorst (2004:30), the persuasive capacity of particular linguistic choices can be difficult to measure, since "[r]hetorical devices often owe their success precisely to the fact that they are not recognized as such". Rather than attempting to provide a definitive result in terms of measurable effects of particular linguistic expressions on individuated audience members, this investigation proposes to explore the *persuasiveness* of Parker's discursive endeavour, a term which is intended to highlight the persuasive potential of the message instead of the resultative state that people are

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<sup>5</sup> Although I will not make analytical use of the three appeals of classical Aristotelian rhetoric, it is nevertheless worth mentioning the relatedness of the first of the research questions to the notion of *ethos*, the second to *pathos* and the third to *logos*.

persuaded. Östman (2005:192) observes that persuasiveness is an intangible phenomenon involving both “explicit choices of meaning” and “implicit choices of how to express ourselves in relation to the demands of the cultural context at hand, in relation to our reader or co-interactant, and our attitudes”. Furthermore, what is popularly referred to as “reading between the lines” means “attempting to decipher in what ways our interlocutors are implicitly anchoring their messages” (Östman 2005:192).

It should be made clear that when using the labels ‘addressor’, ‘writer’ or ‘Parker’ in the current study, these terms are not intended to designate the physical person Robert Parker, whose real world thought processes, perceptions, intentions, anticipations and emotions can be revealed by the analysis. Instead, it is the ‘discursive persona’ that is the target of investigation, i.e. the character of the addressor as it is integrated as an inherent feature of the way in which the message is delivered (Tindale 2004:21), for instance in the attitude towards the subject matter and the audience that the message addresses. Van Eemeren & Grootendorst refer to this analytical approach as externalization, which “is achieved by starting from what people have expressed, implicitly or explicitly, instead of speculating about what they think or believe” (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992:10). In the case of a well-known writer, the discursive persona that emerges from the text is not always separable from information about this person’s character that is accessible through other sources such as the media. Banks (2001) refers to the persona developed in the text as *invented ethos*, while a well-known person’s media image is referred to as *situated ethos*. Both invented and situated ethos are taken to be of importance for the present investigation.

The degree to which a persuasive endeavour is successful ultimately depends on the addressee’s willingness to be persuaded. In order to be taken up favourably by the audience that it addresses, a persuasive attempt therefore needs to be successfully adapted to this group. According to Virtanen & Halmari, “[t]he persuader, with the intention to cause an effect, will monitor and gauge her or his linguistic choices based on sometimes immediately obvious and sometimes estimated and inferred reactions of the audience and multiple audiences” (Virtanen & Halmari 2005:7). In a discursive setting of worldwide mass communication, which is the background of the phenomenon that is presently under study, the addressor cannot be expected to know each and every one of his audience members personally. When constructing a message that is intended for publication, addressors nonetheless have an anticipated addressee in mind, i.e. a mental image of a prospective audience that is targeted by the persuasive attempt. This image of the anticipated audience can be more or less consciously conjured by the addressor. In his investigation of media discourse, Fairclough (1995:126) sees questions of identity and relations as essentially inseparable, acknowledging that “how a reporter’s identity is constructed is in part a question of how a reporter relates to an audience”. The first two research questions presented above can thus be seen as closely related.

In order to be able to study the persuasiveness of Parker's wine writing, it is my intention to go beyond a naive reading of the message and try to make visible aspects of the message that are not immediately observable on the basis of the surface form of the text. This involves revealing potentially persuasive linguistic cues and interpreting them by relating them to the immediate co-text as well as to the discursive context and wider socio-cultural frames in which the texts occur. My approach to the material relies on integration of several kinds of contextual information for the interpretation of the textual material: Importance is assigned to general knowledge about the wider socio-cultural setting of wine consumption, available information about Parker's career as a wine critic as well as awareness of discursive conventions which may, consciously or sub-consciously, constrain the discursive strategies available to writers within a particular field of writing as well as influence the discursive strategies that the audience employs when interpreting the textual message. In other words, I take the persuasive capacity of a textual message to be a function of the context in which the words are spoken, the potential intention behind the words that are used and the way in which the words as well as the intention behind them can be interpreted by the audience. While understanding of the context will be resorted to in order to interpret the text, I will also attempt to show how the text functions to reproduce a particular world view that has come to dominate other world views within the socio-cultural setting where it is staged. I am committed to the idea that "[t]exts are socio-culturally shaped but they also constitute society and culture, in ways which may be transformative as well as reproductive" (Fairclough 1995:34).

The research strategy adopted in the present study is neither sender-oriented nor recipient-oriented, but should rather be seen as analyst-oriented. It is thereby acknowledged that it is the use of analytical tools that allows the analyst to arrive at a specific reading of the text, displaying discursive patterns which neither the real-world writer nor the real-world recipient need necessarily be aware of. Studies like this analysis of wine reviews can nevertheless provide real world writers and recipients with increased knowledge about the (explicit and implicit) strategies that can be drawn on in order to construct a message that is persuasive in the specific situation where it occurs.

The primary aim of my study is to critically explore and try to understand this instance of powerful persuasion, thus contributing to knowledge as to how action-inducing credibility can be achieved in a strictly defined context. In order to shed light on the research questions that were formulated above, three perspectives of Parker's discursive enterprise will be considered:

- persuasiveness in representations
- persuasiveness in argumentation
- persuasiveness in appraisal

While the primary purpose of this study is to provide answers to the empirical research questions, I simultaneously explore the potency of different analytical methodologies to complement each other when performing contextually situated analysis of discourse. In addition, the empirical material is continuously allowed to challenge the theoretical concepts and ideas that are addressed in the investigation.

In order to fully understand the complex and multifaceted topic that is presently being investigated, it is desirable to take into consideration various perspectives involving a range of scientific disciplines, such as sociology, economy, biology and psychology as well as the transdisciplinary issue of globalization. It is important to stress however that although I take an interest in all of these areas, they lie outside my own field of expertise. This study is scientifically grounded in linguistics, and it is therefore first and foremost from this perspective that my investigation aims to make a contribution.

### **1.3 THESIS OUTLINE**

The present study is organized into eight chapters. The introductory chapter was initiated by a presentation of the general background of the communicative phenomenon that the investigation proposes to explore, thus locating it in the socio-cultural frame that provides the setting for Parker's rhetorical endeavour. Furthermore, the aim of this investigation was presented in section 1.2 along with the overarching research questions that guide all the explorations that will be undertaken. The presentation also included an introduction of a number of key concepts as well as an outline of the scope and delimitations of the current enquiry.

Chapter 2 provides a general introduction to the field of interest of the texts that are studied, namely the perception, appreciation and epistemology of wine, which is followed by a survey of previous research on winespeak. The presentation in chapter 2 also includes a discussion of the possibility of applying the notions of genre and register to the wine tasting note and an attempt to position Parker's wine writing with respect to the field of discourse within which it occurs.

Chapter 3 introduces the theory of discourse that underpins the current investigation, which draws on Fairclough's (1992, 1995) model of a communicative event as theoretical umbrella to organize discursive and socio-cultural dimensions into different layers. Moreover, the general methodology is introduced and defined as hermeneutic, involving a constant movement between the layers of the object under study in order to arrive at enhanced understanding. The chapter also offers a description of the particular analytical approaches that will be adopted in order to highlight persuasiveness in representations, argumentation and appraisal.

Chapter 4 provides a description of the data selected for this enquiry by means of a 'semi-random' procedure. The data set consists of a relatively large

collection of texts which is outlined in section 4.1. From this larger body of texts, a limited selection of entire reviews has been extracted for the purpose of presenting close interpretive scrutiny. These particular reviews are described in more detail in section 4.2. Throughout the chapter, I conduct a critical discussion with respect to the selection of data and contemplate the possibility of justifying the choice of material in discourse studies.

Chapter 5 is devoted to the exploration of persuasiveness in representations. The chapter first offers an introduction of the representational frame in which the reviews are embedded as well as a preliminary content analysis. The exploration of representations emanates in a characterization of Parker's wine reviews in terms of thematic units, highlighting both explicit and implicit features that are typical of the material as a whole. Aspects that are brought to the fore are the notions of time and space as well as mode of knowing and source of evidence. The enquiry also evolves around patterns of transitivity in the representation of events.

Building on understanding gained from the analysis of representations, chapter 6 draws on the tools of the pragma-dialectical model of argumentation in order to investigate persuasiveness in argumentation. The analytical discussion conducted in this chapter strives to lay bare the potential argumentative skeletons of the reviews. Section 6.1 presents a generic argumentative skeleton, which emerges from rudimentary examination of the whole corpus. Section 6.2 provides close interpretive inspection of selected reviews, demonstrating the relationship between the texts' original formulations and the argumentative propositions that result from the investigation. The interpretive analysis continuously incorporates a critical discussion of the possibility to arrive at plausible reconstructions of each individual review. It is thereby demonstrated how argumentative cues from other corpus reviews as well as contextual understanding can be resorted to in order to make the reconstructions as far-reaching as possible without going beyond what is conceivably reasonable.

Drawing on the knowledge gained from both the preceding analyses of representations and argumentation, chapter 7 approaches the material using the tools of Appraisal theory. Section 7.1 first explores how the original Appraisal scheme of Attitude needs to be extended in order to deal with the attitudinal meanings referenced in the current material. In addition, an overview of the distribution of Attitude categories in the whole material is provided so as to give a schematic account of Parker's attitudinal profile. Section 7.2 subsequently offers a presentation of interpretive Appraisal analysis of selected reviews, employing the complete tool kit of the Appraisal system.

Chapter 8 first summarizes the light that the investigation has shed on the empirical research questions, drawing attention to the knowledge that has been gained about Parker's discursive persona, about the positioning of the audience and about the texts' preferred world view throughout the analyses of representations, argumentation and appraisal. In addition, the strengths and weaknesses of the analytical methods are evaluated and the advantage of combining them

for the present investigation is illuminated. The discussion also touches on a number of theoretical notions that are challenged by the analyses of the present data. The chapter closes with a concluding comment on the relevance of the current study with respect to a wider landscape of interdisciplinary research targeting the conditions for present-day life in the contemporary culture of consumerism.



## **2 INSTITUTIONAL AND DISCURSIVE PRACTICE**

The present chapter is intended to situate the Parker phenomenon in its institutional and discursive context. Section 2.1 provides a description of the intricacy of the field of wine appreciation, incorporating research on wine tasting in relation to the human senses as well as knowledge about the human sensory apparatus in general. The discussion also touches on the existence of wine epistemology and (the lack of) unified criteria to determine a wine's quality, which reinforces our need of authorities as guides to the appraisal of wine. Section 2.2 presents an overview of previous studies and commentary on the description of wine using language. Although these studies approach the subject of the wine tasting note from perspectives that are theoretically distinct from the approach of this investigation, the findings related in this subsection are nonetheless of importance for the general understanding of the topic under investigation in the current study. Section 2.3 expounds on the notions of genre and register and proposes that the wine tasting note can be seen as a subcategory of the more inclusive discourse domain of winespeak. It is thereby observed that although displaying similar register features, wine tasting notes occur in different contexts with distinct communicative goals, which means that they can be understood to implement distinct genres. The section closes with a characterization of Parker's tasting notes with respect to the idea of activity type and genre, based on the externalization of their ultimate communicative goal. Finally, section 2.4 provides a chapter outline, summing up the points that will be of most immediate importance for the investigation carried out in the present study.

### **2.1 THE INTRICACY OF WINE APPRECIATION**

According to Orrigi (2007:185–187), deference for authority is a natural way of shaping our understanding when we access any new domain of knowledge, and most of today's wine consumers worldwide can be understood to enter the epistemic domain of wine as adults without previous cultural background to influence their judgement of taste. Wine is a particularly complex domain of knowl-

edge because compared to other aesthetic objects, like for instance visual art or music, the aesthetic appreciation of wine is complicated by the fact that it involves a composite perceptual experience.<sup>6</sup> Professional wine tasting normally follows 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 aromas, 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.

Goode (2007:80) observes that the term 'wine tasting' is misleading, since this activity involves four of the human senses: vision, smell, taste and (mouth)feel. According to Viberg (2001:1296), smell is a chemical sense, which does not require direct contact, in contrast to touch, which is a skin sense. In the wine 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. The visual experience is in a super-ordinate position compared to all the other senses, since the colour of the wine can be observed without interference of other sen-

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<sup>6</sup> It should be observed that the same preconditions affect the so called 'elite consumption' (Silverstein 2003) of all kinds of luxury comestibles, food as well as beverages. Although wine has been the most exploited area so far, the same development can be observed with respect to for instance whisky, beer, coffee, tea, chocolate, olive oil, balsamic vinegar and other specific kinds of food. This trend is closely linked to the growing awareness of producers of how they can ride on the wine wave in order to raise the interest of the steadily growing group of competitive elite consumers in their products so as to conquer new markets.

sory input. Physiologically, vision is also known to be our most consistent source of objective data about the world, i.e. it is taken to be more or less identical for different people (Sweetser 1990:39). 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 perceptivity for enhanced colour vision (Goode 2007:81). According to Goode (2007:82), it should be kept in mind that humans are biological creatures, and what we take to be objective reality is an edited and partial version of the world around us, which is based on our subconscious interpretation of what is most relevant for our survival. Similarly, Viberg (2001:1294) observes that the biological purpose of perception is to provide input so as to enable the construction of a cognitive representation of the external world.

According to Classen (1993:7) the relative importance of the different human senses is not stable, but varies across time and across cultures. The importance of vision over the other senses was noted by the philosophers of antiquity and has been further reinforced in Western society, especially from the Enlightenment and onwards (Howes 2002:67–68). According to Viberg (2001:1306), psychological estimations indicate that 80% of human perception concerns vision. Based on psycho-physiological experiments, Viberg (2001:1307) furthermore notes that humans tend to rely on their visual perception when confronted with contradictory auditory or tactile information, even in situations where the visual stimulus is deceptive. Herdenstam (2004:60) observes that in everyday modern life, one third of the brain is occupied by the interpretation of visual information, while only 1% of the brain's capacity is devoted to the sense of smell. Despite having the physical apparatus to perceive thousands of odours (Classen et al. 1994:3), humans are therefore usually bad at identifying them (Jönsson & Olsson (2003:651). According to Jönsson & Olsson (2003:651), this is due to the lack of importance assigned by humans to precise odour identification. Classen et al. (1994:188) suggest that while smell is an underdeveloped sense in our society, there is a direct connection between the sense of smell and the brain so that smells invoke memory, mood and emotions without intermediary cognitive processes, a phenomenon that is exploited in order to sell a diversity of products (Classen et al. 1994:188–192).

As mentioned above, when the wine is in the mouth, the senses of smell, taste and (mouth)feel are intertwined. While the nasal cavity contains around 2,000 receptors which enable recognition of different odours, the receptors on the tongue and soft palate are only able to distinguish between five types of

gustatory input: sweet, salty, bitter, sour and umami (Goode 2007:81).<sup>7</sup> The tactile sensations that the wine gives rise to in the mouth relate to perceptions of astringency, e.g. surface smoothness or harshness, and feel, e.g. heat, coating or weight in the mouth (Gawel et al. 2000). Deroy (2007:112–113) observes that the experience of acidity, astringency and alcohol in wines is also relational: A wine with a high alcohol content and degree of acidity is perceived as less astringent. Similarly, the taste of a Sauternes for example is perceived very differently if combined with a Roquefort or a crème brûlée. Exploring the notions of subjectivity and objectivity in wine tasting, Smith (2007:44) distinguishes between taste as a property of the wine and tasting as a subject's experience, which occurs within the taster. The kind of experience that olfactory and gustatory properties give rise to diverges across humans due to our different capabilities to relate to what we perceive. According to Smith (2007:48), it is still possible to obtain objective information about wines by paying careful attention to particular aspects of the olfactory and gustatory sensations that the tasting experience gives rise to: "The more discerning I am, the more discriminatingly will I use my sensations to tell me something about the properties of the wine and the way it has been made." Smith (2007:68–69) arrives at the conclusion that there is a difference between the quality of a wine and people's personal preferences. He nevertheless argues that "once our perceptions and discriminations are sufficiently refined we can appreciate the reasons for evaluating wines as we do".

Chernigovskaya & Archavsky (2007:227), who have studied testers of odours, indicate that there is a difference between professional testers and non-professionals: Odour professionals generally have a strongly developed right cerebral hemisphere compared to the average person who relies more strongly on the left cerebral hemisphere. Furthermore, an experimental study carried out by Solomon (1997) shows that although experienced wine tasters and novices may perceive and describe the aromas of wines in similar ways, they tend to classify the wines differently due to their divergent organizations of conceptual knowledge: Grape type is an important basis for concept building among experienced tasters, whereas novices tend to base their categorization on other qualities in the wine. Hughson & Boakes (2002) confirm the importance of grape type for the ability to recognize, describe and distinguish between different wines. Castriota-Scanderbeg et al.'s (2005) comparison between expert sommeliers and novices reveals considerable difference between the two groups, experts showing stronger activation of brain regions involving high-level cognitive processing. Furthermore, McCoy (2005:276) reports on a study carried out by Bartochuk, which demonstrates that the intensity with which in-

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<sup>7</sup> The fifth basic taste, umami, was scientifically recognized in 1985. Umami is difficult for most humans to identify, but is understood to contribute to the sensation of pleasure of taste felt by humans. Information about umami is available at for instance <http://www.umamiinfo.com/>. Date of access 27 September 2011.

dividuals perceive taste differs considerably. The study arrived at the result that 25% of the population are so called super tasters, i.e. have more numerous taste buds and therefore more susceptible to registering tastes. These studies thus indicate that there are justifiable reasons why we should rely on the judgements of professional tasters.

However, in a series of experiments intentionally designed to deceive the senses, Morrot and his colleagues at INRA (l'Institut national français de la recherche agronomique) have shown that smells and tastes do not exist in themselves as objective features of wines (Morrot et al. 2001, INRA 2005). They claim that the perception of smells and tastes is partly construed by means of elements which are external to the wine, e.g. expectations, emotions, context, and that the experience of a wine tasting event is the result of interaction between such external data, chemical substances in the wine and sensory receptors in the individual. In an experiment carried out by Morrot's research group (INRA 2005), experienced wine tasters were asked to evaluate the same wine served out of different bottles with different labels, Grand Cru Classé and Vin de Table respectively, an experiment which gave the following result: An overwhelming majority of the tasters gave the wine with the Grand Cru Classé label higher ranking than the one with the Vin de Table label although it was the same wine. In addition, a majority of the tasters claimed that they could perceive a taste of wood in the wine labelled Grand Cru Classé, whereas none of the informants made the same statement about the wine labelled Vin de Table. This result was taken as evidence for the idea that not even the brains of experienced tasters are capable of reliably distinguishing olfactory and gustatory information from other types of available data.<sup>8</sup>

The winner of the World Championship for Sommeliers in 2007, Andreas Larsson, who has wide-ranging experience with blind-tasting wine, maintains that wine appreciation is not only about the immediate perception of the wine in the glass, but also about the mystique associated with traditions in the wine world, high price and long-standing prestige. The world's most expensive wine, Château Pétrus, may therefore not stand out as special in a blind tasting. Rather, it is the knowledge that you are sipping a wine that is worth several thousand Euros that adds to the feeling of awe and the experience of pleasure. According to Larsson (personal communication), it is therefore dubious whether the qualities of a wine can be assessed based solely on the liquid in the glass.<sup>9</sup> Larsson's observation correlates with recent research in Neuroeconomics, where experimental studies reveal that more expensive wines generate

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<sup>8</sup> This experiment can be compared to McClure et al.'s (2004) investigation of the appreciation of Coke versus Pepsi, where a strong preference for Coke is registered when the brand name is known to informants. (See also Goode (2007:97–98) on further experimentation involving Coke and Myers (1999:6–7), who has tested informants' capacity to distinguish between different kinds of colas when tasting the liquid blind from plastic cups.

<sup>9</sup> My meeting with Andreas Larsson took place on 9 May 2008.

greater pleasure among wine consumers, regardless of what is actually in the glass (Plassmann et al. 2008).<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Mueller et al. (2009:3) suggest that favourable assessments by critics tend to also “positively [influence] how the wine will taste”.

Charters (2007), who has studied approaches to assessment of wine quality, observes that the views on this issue differs among professionals in the wine business, ranging from those who withhold that the quality of a wine should be evaluated on the basis of objectively established guidelines to those who argue that as long as the wine is fault-free, it should be assessed with respect to how faithfully it reproduces its particular characteristics.<sup>11</sup> Those who do maintain that standardized evaluative benchmarks should be upheld in the assessment of wine refer to a number of value dimensions that should be seen as indicators of a wine’s quality, for instance balance, complexity, intensity and persistence of flavour, uniqueness and appearance. There is however variation among wine judges with respect to how such aspects are weighted, depending on the judges’ background, experience and preferences (Charters 2007:161–162). The value dimensions that are brought up in the context of wine assessment partly overlap with the general canons that have previously been established for the assessment of other aesthetic phenomena such as art, music and poetry. According to Beardsley’s (1981) philosophical account of aesthetic critique, these are unity, complexity and intensity.<sup>12</sup> A fourth addition to the three general aesthetic canons has been proposed: distinctiveness, which subsumes novelty, character and an element of surprise (Charters 2007:174).

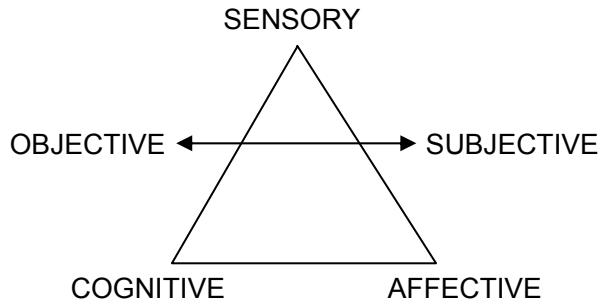
Furthermore, Charters (2007:162) contemplates the psychophysical nature of an aesthetic experience like wine tasting, i.e. whether the experience is primarily an affective, cognitive or sensory process. The figure below illustrates these different psychophysical responses to the experience of wine quality:

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<sup>10</sup> Goode (2007, 2008) reports on a set of related experiments involving consumer appreciation, which contribute to the portrayal of the field of sensory appreciation as highly complex and sometimes contradictory.

<sup>11</sup> Such characteristics could be related to the grape type, which is the case in for instance America and Australia, or the soil quality, the location of the vineyard and the estate’s longstanding *savoir-faire* in terms of production techniques, which is traditionally of more importance in for instance France.

<sup>12</sup> According to Charters (2007:173), Beardsley himself would not have accepted the link of his canons for aesthetic critique to wine, because he was of the opinion that “wine is not capable of aesthetic appreciation”.



**Figure 2:1 The cognitive, sensory, affective approach to drinking, from Charters (2007:164)**

Based on observations of wine drinkers, Charters (2007:162) indicates that informants’ psychophysical approach to wine quality varies, some of the informants assigning more importance to the cognitive/sensory dimension of the experience while some put more emphasis on the affective/sensory dimension.

Although Smith’s (2007:71–72) philosophical account of wine emanates in the idea that wine tasting can be seen as an objective exercise, where the real, objective taste of a wine can be accessed through an experienced taster’s subjective responses, he also cautions against too many people’s reliance on just one critic “whose tastes and preferences come to dominate the market because of commercial pressures and financial speculation”. This, he argues, can lead to simplifications that entail loss of cultural diversity and richness, which ultimately delimits opportunities for aesthetic experiences. Smith’s reasoning seems to simultaneously endorse and contradict the idea of wine tasting as an objective venture. According to Goode (2007:80), it is a common misconception to see a critic’s ratings as properties of the wines. Goode (2007:96) emphasizes that wine critics’ assessments should not be taken to be true reflections of what is actually in the liquid, but should be understood as perceptual representations of a particular person’s experience.

It is important to realize that the power of critics depends on “the willingness of the wine consumer to accept the validity of their recommendations about what is, or is not, worth drinking” (Charters 2007:157). The effectiveness of a recommendation “presupposes a set of social relations, an institution, by virtue of which a particular individual, who is *authorized* to speak and *recognized* as such by others, is able to speak in a way that others will regard as acceptable in the circumstances” (Thompson (1991:8–9), editor’s intro to Bourdieu (1991)). Orrigi (2007) discusses different epistemology systems that function to orient people’s appraisal of a wine’s quality. She says that the Bordeaux château system, which is based on a combination of the vineyard’s position and soil quality as well as the long-standing performance of the proprietor, whose *savoir-faire* is assumed to be inherited from one generation to the next, is so complex and entangled that it can only be properly understood by elite

connoisseurs. Orrigi (2007) also expounds on our propensity to trust authorities as reliable guides to the aesthetic appraisal of wine. According to Orrigi (2007:183–184), while wine critics claim to promote the individual wine drinker’s own palate as the ultimate guide to a wine’s quality, their very activity as wine critics implies the opposite. Furthermore, she proposes that Parker is seen by many consumers to provide a truer judgement of wine quality than critics who adhere to traditional ranking systems, primarily because he is identified as “a friend of the ordinary consumer, not siding with experts and the elite”, and “it is the display of his moral qualities that reinforces his authority” (Orrigi 2007:193). In a similar vein, McCoy (2005:137) suggests that Parker’s stance as consumer advocate has been key, bestowing wine with credibility on the global market. Orrigi (2007:183–184) goes on to pose the more general question what connoisseurship is really about, having expertise in a domain or having good taste. The same dichotomy is discussed by Bourdieu (1984:68) with respect to the difference between gastronomy, which is “the set of *rules* which govern the *education* and cultivation of taste” and taste, which is “the *natural gift* of loving and recognizing perfection”. Silverstein (2004:643) hints at three stances towards connoisseurship: First, the absolute stance, which is related to inherited breeding and life-long acculturation, second, the stance of “upward mobility” according to which connoisseurship can be achieved by training, and third, naïve virtuosity of sensory perception which could nonetheless be seen to reveal a form of natural breeding. According to Silverstein, the second stance is exploited by aggressive commercial interests to create a market among consumers who are anxious about displaying appropriate consumption preferences with respect to the social identity that they want to project (see Chapter 1, introduction).

## 2.2 THE LANGUAGE OF WINE

According to Herdenstam (2004:36), the ability to verbalize the experience of wine tasting is an important aspect of professional wine tasters’ competence. Silverstein (2003) argues that the mastery of the so called tasting note, which is designed to transfer the complex perceptual experience of the wine into a linguistic expression, distinguishes professional wine tasters from other consumers. According to Caballero (2009:74), the tasting note has “critically contributed to promoting wine” among consumers. Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010:266) suggest that tasting notes play an important role in wine acculturation, in the sense that non-expert wine lovers extend their knowledge about wine by regularly engaging with tasting notes written by expert wine tasters and critics.

Silverstein’s (2003) investigation reveals that an important aspect of professional writing of tasting notes is an iconic reflection of the wine tasting procedure (see section 2.1), i.e. first, the visual impression of the wine is described followed by the olfactory and gustatory impressions, subsequently, the wine’s



aftertaste or internal olfactory impression is captured, and finally, the finish, i.e. how the wine vaporizes. Caballero (2007:2099) gives the following dispositional schema for wine tasting notes based on a corpus of 6,000 texts collected from *The Wine Advocate*, *Wine Spectator* and *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*. All of these sources are American subscription-regulated wine magazines.

**Table 2:1 Organization of tasting notes, from Caballero (2007:2099)**

<b>Technical card (optional)</b>	
Introduction of wine	
Name and year	and/or
Winery	and/or
Price	and/or
Score	and/or
Cases/bottles made	and/or
Grape composition	and/or
First evaluation of wine	
Assessment of the wine's color	
Assessment of the wine's nose (aroma and bouquet)	
Assessment of the wine's palate (flavors and texture or mouthfeel)	
Attack	and/or
Mid-palate	and/or
Aftertaste or finish	
Closing evaluation of the wine	
Potential consumers	and/or
Consumption span	and/or
Recommended food	and/or
Final evaluation	

Caballero's schema makes it clear that the wine tasting note may include considerably more information than description of the wine's colour, smell, taste and mouth-feel. Preceding the perceptual experiences, i.e. the visual, olfactory, gustatory and tactile impressions of the wine, we find aspects related to the production of the wine, e.g. vintage, grape type etc. Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010:269), whose study builds on a corpus of 12,000 tasting notes from both British and American wine critics, observe that instead of, or in addition to, including this information in the main text of the tasting note, information relating to production can be presented in a separate technical card listing details such as the winery's location, the wine's importers, its price or the number of bottles produced.<sup>13</sup> Finally, the presentation of perceptual experiences is fol-

<sup>13</sup> The corpus of 12,000 tasting notes on which Caballero & Suárez Toste's (2010) study is based consists of material from the British sources *Decanter*, *The Wine Pages* and *The Wine Anorak* and the American sources *Wine Spectator*, *The Wine Advocate* and *Wine News*.

lowed by remarks about the prospective consumption of the wine. Caballero's organization schema for wine tasting notes will be of particular use in the content analysis presented in section 5.2 of this study.

In a causerie article, Shesgreen (2003) discusses the terminology that is used in wine tasting notes, dividing it into three categories based on the fields from which it has been borrowed: the language of social class (*well-bred, noble, ordinary* etc.), the language of gender (*masculine, sturdy, feminine, delicate* etc.) and the language of fruit and vegetables (*pears, figs, plums* etc.). Silverstein (2003), who explores what he refers to as oinoglossia from the perspective of indexicality, focuses specifically on linguistic expressions of prestige and high class, i.e. the first of Shesgreen's (2003) categories. According to Silverstein (2003), whose study is based on tasting notes written by the British wine expert Michael Broadbent, wine consumers who use expressions like for instance *well-bred* or *gentlemanly* to designate their tasting experience simultaneously bestow on themselves some of the meaning of these items so that they become the refined connoisseur of the wine world whose expressions they are using.<sup>14</sup>

Shesgreen, however, observes that the language of social class and gender, which used to be popular during the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, is more or less out of fashion among today's most influential wine critics, while the third category is currently more widespread, at least among American wine writers. The language of fruit and vegetables has given wine a new appearance of health food, and wine has therefore begun to be seen as "a natural medicine that keeps the doctor away", according to Shesgreen (2003).

Shesgreen's observation correlates with attempts made within the growing educational field of oenology to regulate the use of terminology for professional purposes. The system developed by professors of oenology at the University of California for the description of the smell of wines has become widespread under the epithet Aroma Wheel.<sup>15</sup> The Aroma Wheel is represented as figure 2:2 below:

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<sup>14</sup> Indexicality refers to the way in which connections are construed between signs and states of affairs on the basis of our conventional understanding.

<sup>15</sup> Although the Aroma Wheel is a Californian invention, the trend of labelling the smell of wines by means of categories of descriptors had already been initiated by Professor of oenology Émile Peynaud at the University of Bordeaux (McCoy 2005:269).

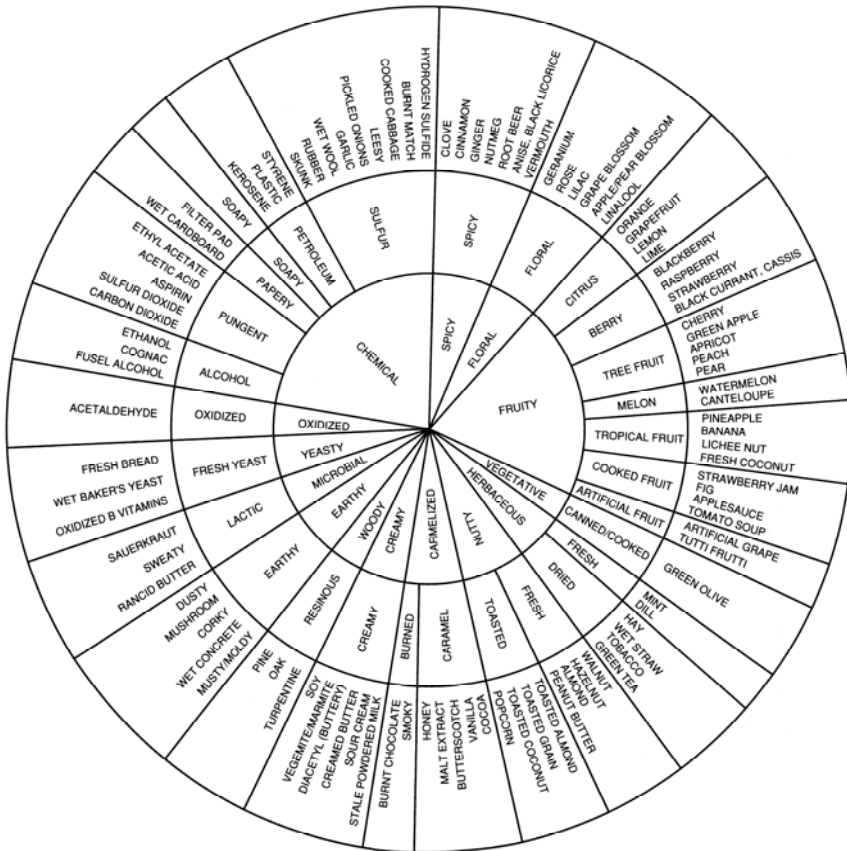


Figure 2:2 Wine Aroma Wheel, copyright 1990, 2002, A C Noble [www.winearomawheel.com](http://www.winearomawheel.com)<sup>16</sup>

The Aroma Wheel organizes aroma descriptors into three tiers of specificity. The most general descriptors, found in the inner circle, are adjectives like *fruity*, *nutty*, *woody*, *floral*. In the next tier, the fields of the general adjectival descriptors are subdivided into more specific fields, and these fields are in turn further subdivided in the third tier. A majority of the most specific descriptors are nouns, and most of them refer to the semantic field of plants. As an example *lemon*, *strawberry*, *cherry* are subdescriptors of *fruity*, and *geranium*, *rose* and *lilac* are subdescriptors of *floral*. The chart above gives an overview of the wine aroma terminology that has been recommended by the University of California, Davis. The Aroma Wheel can be seen as an instantiation of Shesgreen's

<sup>16</sup> I thank Professor Ann Noble for the permission to reprint the Aroma wheel.

(2003) wine language category of fruit and vegetables, although it is worth observing that more artefacts than fruit and vegetables are included in the wheel's tiers.<sup>17</sup> According to McCoy (2005) the type of wine description represented by the Aroma Wheel has been encouraged because it is taken to be meaningful, objective and scientific, and therefore to reflect true sensory analysis. Use of the anthropomorphic terminology of class and gender, which was observed by Shesgreen (2003) to have been popular in previous decades, has simultaneously been discouraged from an educational perspective on the grounds that it evokes evaluative associations.

While proclaiming to constitute an objective tool for the description of the smell of wine, the Aroma Wheel can be said to encourage a particular approach to the description of smell, namely decomposition of the holistic experience of the wine's olfactory impression into component parts. Herdenstam (2004) investigates the application of 'analytic' vs. 'synthetic' wine description. Analytic description focuses on the aspects of the wine tasting experience that can be perceived by the physiological senses. In analytic wine description, the sensory perceptions of vision, smell, taste and touch are described separately from one another by means of established terminologies that are designed to enable communication about the wine tasting experience. These pertain to specific olfactory components of the wine's aroma and bouquet as well as gustatory and tactile impressions of the level of sweetness, acidity, alcohol, astringency, weight (body) and length. The point of analytic description is to identify different smells and tastes in the wine and describe them independently, which according to Herdenstam (2004:70) is not completely possible due to the limitations and simultaneous interaction of the human physiological senses (see section 2.1). Synthetic wine description, on the other hand, aims at capturing the surround of sensory impressions in a holistic linguistic expression, which often relies on comparison or association. In Herdenstam's study, different professional wine tasters are shown to use the same synthetic term to designate different experiences based on their different training or practical understanding, without any of them being necessarily right or wrong (Herdenstam 2004:78). Furthermore, Herdenstam (2004:79) concludes that when the wine taster concentrates on the component parts in order to give an analytic description of the wine tasting experience, the synthetic aspects of the experience are eclipsed. Shesgreen's categories of wine terminology can be compared with what Herdenstam (2004) terms analytic and synthetic wine description: While the cate-

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<sup>17</sup> Despite the label, the Aroma Wheel includes both aroma descriptors, which relate to the smell of the grapes from which the wine is made, and terms that target the bouquet, i.e. the smells emanating from the vinification process and the ageing of the wine. The division between aroma and bouquet is generally upheld in professional wine tasting (see e.g. Schuster 1989). However, according to Lehrer (1975:906) there is no universal agreement among experts about the distinction between terms for aroma and bouquet.

gories of social class and gender are of the synthetic type, the language of fruit and vegetables can be seen as analytic.

According to McCoy (2005:269–271), the base of Parker’s tasting notes is made up of the type of analytic terms represented in the Aroma Wheel, although he has vastly expanded the range of terms by the addition of new descriptors that also have a concrete ring to them, especially words for fruit and food (*blueberry, black raspberry, bacon fat, pain grillé*) as well as texture (*silky, velvety*). McCoy (2005:272) considers this way of deconstructing the overall experience of wine, i.e. “by breaking it down into a combination of many individual elements” to be the most significant aspect of Parker’s wine descriptions. This, she argues, backgrounds the surround of experience, i.e. the fact that wine is part of a wider culture. Discussing the importance of chemistry in wine making, Deroy (2007:101–102) observes that chemical terminology is not used when wine is talked about: An aroma verbalized by means of the term mushroom may for instance emanate from 1-octen3-ol, while what is perceived by the human olfactory organ as a smell of cherry can be related to the presence of benzaldehyde. According to Deroy, wine lovers are however generally not interested in the chemistry of the wine making process, presumably, she speculates, because people like to think of wine as a natural product.

In addition to the Aroma Wheel, several other terminologies have been developed to regulate the description of wine language for professional purposes. The British organization Wine and Spirit Education Trust proposes a wine tasting template that provides terms organized in scales for the following properties of the wine (from Herdenstam 2004:58):

#### Appearance

Intensity: *pale – medium – deep – opaque*

Colour: *purple – ruby – garnet etc.*

#### Nose

Condition: *clean – unclean*

Intensity: *weak – medium – pronounced*

Development: *youthful – grape aromas – aged bouquet – tired – oxidized*

Fruit character: *fruity, floral, vegetal, spicy, woods, smoky, animals etc.*

#### Palate

Sweetness: *dry – off-dry – medium dry – medium sweet – sweet – luscious*

Acidity: *flabby – low – balanced – crisp – acidic*

Tannin: *astringent – hard – balanced – soft*

Body: *thin – light – medium – full – heavy*

Fruit intensity: *weak – medium – pronounced*

Fruit character: (same as for nose)

Alcohol: *light – medium – high*

Length: *short – medium – long*

The description of wine along such scales is explored by Lehrer (1975), who categorizes wine words into the scales of Acidity, Sweetness, Astringency, Age, Body and Nose. Lehrer demonstrates how such scales are coordinated so that for instance the scales of Acidity and Sweetness are combined to form a unified scale of Balance. According to Lehrer (1975:903–906), the scalar systems employed by wine writers are coordinated with an evaluative scale of goodness. The scales relating to taste and mouth-feel, i.e. Acidity, Sweetness, Astringency, Age and Body, correlate with the scale of evaluation in such a way that the most positive descriptors are to be found somewhere in the middle of the other scales. Figure 2.3 exemplifies this feature of Lehrer’s categorization of wine words:

	Too much NEGATIVE	POSITIVE	Too little NEGATIVE
SWEETNESS	cloying	sweet    dry	
ACIDITY	sour	tart	flat
	unbalanced	balanced	unbalanced

**Figure 2:3. The scales of Acidity and Sweetness combined with the scales of Balance and evaluation, from Lehrer (1975:904).**

Similarly, the scales of Acidity and Astringency can be coordinated with the scale of Age and evaluation to form a corresponding pattern. While the linguistic items used to describe wines can be organized into these neat scalar systems, this does not necessarily entail that different people mean the same thing when they refer to a wine as for instance ‘cloying’ or ‘tart’, because people may apply different norms. The scale for Nose is different from the scales pertaining to taste and mouth-feel, since it is coordinated with a simple scale of evaluation from positive to negative. Items like for instance *fruity*, *perfumed*, *scented* etc. are used as positive evaluators of Nose. Examples of negative evaluators of Nose are *musty*, *yeasty* etc. which refer to specific undesirable smells (Lehrer 1975:906).

Furthermore, Gawel et al. (2000) have designed a Mouth-feel Wheel for red wines, which is similar to the Aroma Wheel in that it organizes terms into three tiers of which the innermost layer divides the mouth-feel terms into two catego-

ries: Feel and Astringency.<sup>18</sup> The second tier presents groups of terms that are subordinate to these categories, such as for instance Weight, Harsh and Surface Smoothness. In the outermost tier, these categories are further subdivided. The terms *viscous*, *full*, *thin*, *watery* are thereby categorized as subdescriptors of Weight, *hard*, *aggressive*, *abrasive* as subdescriptors of Harsh and *furry*, *fine emery*, *velvet*, *suede*, *silk*, *chamois*, *satin* as subdescriptors of Surface Smoothness. The visual layout of the Mouth-feel Wheel in terms of sectors in a circle obscures the organization of the subdescriptors in terms of scales. Although the second-order sector of Weight, for instance, can be understood to present the terms along the scale from most to least viscous, i.e. *viscous* – *watery*, other groupings of terms are less relatable to different points on a scale, e.g. *velvet*, *suede*, *silk*, *chamois*, *satin*.

Comparing the American wine vocabulary of the 1970s with today's terminology, Lehrer (2009:42) observes that the range of words to describe smell has grown immensely. She suggests that an important driving force in this development has been the popularity of Parker's descriptions, which promote smell at the expense of taste. As pointed out above, the terminology for the description of smell provided by the Aroma Wheel is designed to and believed to constitute an appropriate tool for objective wine aroma description. However, Morrot et al. (2001), who investigate wine writers' application of olfactory terminology, demonstrate that the choice of aroma descriptors is strongly influenced by the colour of the wine. Their investigation was carried out by means of lexical analysis of wine tasting comments made by English and French wine writers. The analysis shows that when the smell of a wine is captured in linguistic expressions the descriptors used are objects that have the same colour as the wine. Descriptions of red wines are typically found to include expressions such as for instance *cherry*, *blackcurrant*, *chocolate*, while white wines are described by means of terms like *almond*, *lemon*, *grapefruit*.

The clear results of the lexical analysis led Morrot and his research group to suspect that the sense of smell is overruled by the sense of vision when the wine tasting experience is captured in words. This assumption was subsequently confirmed by a psychophysical experiment: The smell of a white wine artificially coloured red with an odourless dye was consistently described by means of descriptors normally used about red wines by a panel of 54 professional tasters. It was thereby concluded that the deceptive visual information had made the tasters discount the olfactory information (Morrot et al. 2001).<sup>19</sup>

Lehrer, who has been investigating the language of wine since the 1970s, describes several experiments where she has tested amateur wine drinkers' as

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<sup>18</sup> The second tier categories of Acidity and Flavour are however excluded from the more general groups of Feel and Astringency. The Mouth-feel Wheel is available at [http://www.fantastic-flavour.com/files-downloads/mouthfeel\\_wine.pdf](http://www.fantastic-flavour.com/files-downloads/mouthfeel_wine.pdf). Date of access 6 July 2011.

<sup>19</sup> Morrot et al.'s (2001) results can be said to confirm the tendency observed in the experiments related by Viberg (2001, see section 2.1)

well as experts' capacity to apply linguistic descriptions to wines or to identify wines based on linguistic descriptions given by others. *Talking about wine* (Lehrer 1975) as well as *Wine and conversation* (Lehrer 1983) presents experimental sessions where distinctive wines were served blind. Subjects were first asked to describe the wines in terms of smell, taste and mouth-feel. Second, they were provided with a list of descriptors and asked to determine which terms applied to the wines. Third, they were given a list of terms and asked to determine whether these did or did not apply to the wines. In addition, they were asked whether they liked the wines or not. The most striking result, according to Lehrer, was that the selection of descriptors varied enormously depending on the subjects' emotional appreciation of the wine. Lehrer (2009:169–186) describes several subsequent experiments, which have been carried out by Lehrer herself and other researchers, all of them displaying consistent results: Although experts were shown to perform slightly better than amateurs, especially regarding wines they had been extensively trained for, the success rate of matching verbal descriptions to the corresponding wines was still surprisingly low, even when the verbal description had been provided by the subjects themselves during a previous tasting session. The results of these experiments are consistent with the findings of Chapoutier's experiments using Parker's descriptions (McCoy 2005, see section 1.1).

The lack of exact terms to describe smell and taste has led to the adoption of an abundance of figurative expressions in wine writing, which according to Caballero (2009:74) entails that "wine jargon [...] still retains some of the mystique traditionally associated with the topic". Caballero (2009) as well as Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010) divide the most salient metaphorical frames used in wine descriptions into three main groups: first, those of living organisms, including human characteristics (*forceful, weak, youthful, tired, aggressive, upfront, honest*), second, textiles (*open-knit, velvety, tightly-wound*) as well as other manufactured entities (musical pieces or buildings) and third, three-dimensional geometrical bodies (*layers, square, angular, deep, round*). Amoraritei (2002) expounds on the generativity of the metaphorical schema of the human body in French wine writing, revealing frequent figurative patterns relating to three aspects of the human body: the constitution of the body as a whole (*gras, souple, robuste*), marks of femininity such as clothing (*robe, corsage*) or characteristics understood as stereotypically female (*doux, délicat*) and parts of the human body (*jambes, bouche, nez*).

Lehrer (2007:132) observes that wine scientists or oenologists who have university education are less apt to using fanciful metaphors than wine writers, who strive to make their prose interesting and colourful in order to entertain readers. She notes that due to the popularity of wine, the vocabulary used in tasting notes is constantly expanded with new, more or less metaphorical, synonyms or near-synonyms, so that whole ranges of words are used to refer to approximately the same characteristic in a wine, for instance *sturdy, big, fat, brawny, stout, muscular, big-boned* and *chunky*, which are all used to represent



a wine as being *full-bodied*. While no clear meaning difference can be distinguished when such synonyms are used in the field of wine writing, the particular items may nonetheless give rise to different associations among those who are confronted with them based on their different experiences with the use of these expressions in other domains. Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010: 270–271) bring up the methodological problem of making a clear-cut division between figurative and non-figurative expressions in wine writing. They hypothesize that novice readers are likely to regard as figurative expressions that experts consider conventionalized to such a degree that the source domain is no longer evoked. Gluck (2003) as well as Shapin (2005) condemns the use of creative metaphors in tasting notes on the grounds that this feature of wine writing gives rise to ridicule.

Shesgreen (2003) points out that an important aspect of the figurative expressions chosen to characterize wine is that they rarely invoke perceptual experiences that our culture associates with unpleasantness: expressions like ‘brussel sprouts’, ‘broccoli’ or ‘garlic’ are not likely to occur in wine tasting notes. Similarly, Suárez Toste (2007:60) proposes that an item like ‘dandruff’ would hardly be used to designate a wine’s sediment although it otherwise fits into the frequently employed living organism schema, the reason being that it invokes associations that are not perceived as agreeable in our culture. It is worth observing however that items like *barnyard* or *horse-sweat* are not infrequent as positive descriptors of wines. Although these items may have clearly negative implications for some people, there are no univocal criteria to determine which terms may invoke associations that are to be defined as unpleasant.

Furthermore, Caballero (2007) explores the metaphorical use of manner-of-motion verbs in tasting notes, arriving at the idea that these verbs function to portray degrees of specific olfactory and gustatory qualities in the wine that is being assessed. As an example of this phenomenon, her study suggests that *jump* occurs in wine writing alongside other motion verbs, like for instance *emerge*, *creep*, *glide*, to express the degree of intensity (force/speed) and/or persistence of the quality that is being described.

Thibault (2004:222) remarks that “a high degree of ellipsis” is a grammatical characteristic of professional wine writing. In order to arrive at an appropriate interpretation of such elliptic constructions, Thibault assumes that readers resort to a system of interpretation that is organized in four layers: (i) the resources of some language system, (ii) access to the register-specific semantics of the lexicogrammatical selections in the text, (iii) the indexical practices of invoking specific (perceptual) contents of taste as having specific cultural values or relevancies, and (iv) the socio-economic practices and values and the discourse genres associated with the activity of wine tasting. Using the example “*Soft, fruity and milky, with good balance.*”, which occurs as a graphical sentence in the wine tasting note selected for analysis, Thibault specifies the clause type as relational attributive, suggesting that the genre-aware reader automatically contributes the copular verb *be* in order to complete the clause. In addi-

tion, previous perceptual experiences with other wines may be retrieved from memory and contribute to the interpretation so that specific perceptual meanings will be attributed to the lexical items (*soft, fruity, milky* etc.) even in the absence of the direct perceptual experience. Thibault's analysis is arrived at through theoretical discussion, introspection and interpretation and does not involve actual readers' interpretation in experimental sessions.

According to Graddol (2006), who explores the semiotic construction of labels on wine bottles, the description featuring on the labels is restricted by regulations which prevent the use of explicit expressions of quality and desirability, such as for instance the term 'excellent' as a descriptor of the wine. This has led to the development of covert ways of signalling the quality of a wine in terms of a code according to which there is a strong association between the quality of the wine and the level of specificity of the details that are included in the description.

From a more general linguistic perspective, Paradis (2009b), who has carried out an investigation of drink time specifications in *The Wine Advocate*, proposes that the linguistic encoding of this feature of the tasting note is influenced by its interpersonal function as recommendation. Recommendations are a type of speech acts (Austin 1962) that are characterized by both epistemic uncertainty, associated with the future, and weakly deontic modality, relating to the fact that the speech act is performed for the benefit of the addressee rather than the speaker. While it should be made clear that Paradis aims to make a general claim about language, which is not confined to the wine tasting note, her results will be of significance for the analytical approach adopted in the current study, which is why they have been included in this overview.<sup>20</sup>

This section has provided an outline of previous studies and commentary on the language of wine that are of importance for the present investigation. In view of the fact that Parker is considered one of the most authoritative voices in the field of wine writing today, several of the studies related in this section make reference to or involve material from *The Wine Advocate*, for instance Lehrer (2009), Caballero (2007, 2009), Paradis (2009b) and Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010). The focus of these investigations has however been to highlight characteristics that are typical of winespeak in general rather than to study Parker's texts in their own right as persuasive rhetoric within a specialized field of discourse.

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<sup>20</sup> Paradis (2009b) builds on data randomly selected from issues of *The Wine Advocate* ranging from 1995–2005.

## 2.3 THE WINE TASTING NOTE – REGISTER, GENRE, ACTIVITY TYPE

Lehrer (2009:vii) observes that winespeak occurs in a number of disparate settings in addition to the tasting note, ranging from informal dinner party conversations among wine amateurs to scientific research publications in the field of oenology or other related research disciplines. Winespeak is also used in the restaurant business for communication with guests or by producers in negotiations with wine merchants (Herdenstam 2004:125). The term winespeak is used to designate spoken as well as written text. What is referred to as tasting notes is a particular subcategory of the more inclusive field of winespeak. While winespeak can be seen as a domain of discourse, the tasting note has been referred to as a genre (see e.g. Caballero 2009, Caballero & Suárez Toste 2010, Thibault 2004), which is “written by expert wine tasters and critics for a presumably knowledgeable audience” and which stands out as “one of the most representative genres of wine discourse” according to Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010:268).

The term ‘genre’ is used in the literature with a range of different meanings relating to the ways in which it has been employed in different theoretical paradigms. Martin & White (2005:32) define genre as “a staged goal oriented social process”. Eggins (2004:54) expounds on the interpretation of genre as “the ‘cultural purpose’ of text”, a definition which is widespread, according to Fairclough (2003:70, see also e.g. Thompson 2004, Martin & Rose 2003). Furthermore, Eggins (2004:55) describes this notion of genre as habitualized ways of interacting in certain contexts, which become “typical ways of negotiating those contexts”. The label genre is also used to designate the realization of discursive activity in terms of recurrent textual patterns. These patterns make it identifiable by audiences, thus facilitating interpretation since the audience can draw on previous experiences with the same genre to assist the interpretive process. These two definitions of genre are not mutually exclusive but can, according to Virtanen & Halmari (2005:13), be seen as operating on separate levels of analysis: “genres as abstractions and genres as concrete realizations of those abstractions”. Based on Swales (1990), Virtanen & Halmari (2005:11) suggest that we can understand the notion of genre “as a class of communicative events with a common set of communicative goals shared by members of a given discourse community”. Furthermore, a class of communicative events is often identifiable on the basis that it is designated by a label. In the present context, ‘tasting note’ can be seen as such a unifying label. While the studies related in section 2.2 have highlighted textual features that represent core characteristics of the tasting note, individual texts can be recognized by people as belonging to this category even if they should display some features that deviate from the core of the category.

Due to the enormous expansion of interest in wine consumption, wine tasting notes are available through many different channels, for instance daily

newspapers, lifestyle magazines, on the internet, on wine bottles as descriptions of the content and in commercial advertisements. The communicative goal of commercial advertisements can be understood to be fundamentally different from that of declaration of contents on a wine bottle as well as that of the writing offered by wine critics. Since the wine tasting note may appear in a variety of different contexts where different communicative goals can be assumed, I will refer to this subtype of winespeak by the term ‘register’, which is used in the linguistics literature to designate “recognizable configurations of linguistic resources in certain contexts” (Thompson 2004:40). In the present study, ‘genre’ is seen as an overarching category incorporating the communicative purpose of an occurrence of the tasting note: For instance, a tasting note which functions to advertise a wine and has the unrestricted communicative goal of making consumers buy the targeted product is understood to employ the genre of promotion. Correspondingly, tasting notes that are found on wine bottles to provide a declaration of contents are understood to be fundamentally associated with the genre of information, which according to Graddol (2006, see section 2.2) is subject to standardized regulations.<sup>21</sup>

Although displaying similar linguistic characteristics, the tasting note written by wine critics, which is the wine discourse type of most pertinent importance in the current study, are seen to have yet another communicative goal, i.e. to assess the targeted wine, thereby providing the audience with advice regarding future consumption choices. Lehrer (2007:135) proposes that an additional purpose of the writing of wine critics, in addition to providing assessments/recommendations, can also be to entertain in order to retain their readers’ interest. While it may be true that the driving force underlying linguistic creativity and innovation in wine critics’ writing is an ambition to maintain the audience’s interest and attention, it can also be harmful for the persuasive potential of the message if this ambition should become too evident, because it risks highlighting the writer’s brilliance thereby eclipsing the purpose of giving succinct consumption advice to the audience that is addressed.

Virtanen & Halmari (2005:12–13) argue that both the existence of audience and the notion of persuasion are intimately connected with the notion of genre: The audience members’ expectations of the unfolding of texts are based on their culture-specific knowledge of the particular genre. While not explicitly stated as a list of rules in a particular discursive situation, an addressor’s possibilities of employing discursive strategies of persuasion can nonetheless be understood to be constrained by the conventions of the genre in which the persuasive attempt occurs, since such canonical conventions similarly function to facilitate the audience’s interpretation. Caballero’s organization schema of the tasting note (see table 2:1) suggests that wine tasting notes written by wine crit-

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<sup>21</sup> Van Eemeren (2010) conducts a theoretical discussion about the notions of ‘genre’ and ‘activity type’, which has inspired the account presented in the current study.

ics have a highly conventionalized schematic structure. The *and/or* in the right hand column of the table nevertheless indicates that there is also room for wine writers to make individual choices, which means that different wine writers can choose to include or leave out different kinds of information. The selections made from this schema by individual wine writers can be seen as part of their communicative repertoires.

In order to characterize the discursive activity under study, the activity type of review writing with its associated genre of assessment/recommendation has been demarcated from the activity types of advertisements and declaration of contents with their archetypically associated genres of promotion and information. While I want to signal awareness that in reality the boundaries between these categories are not precise, the distinctions are nonetheless of analytical importance in the present study. In addition, there may also be considerable variation within the more general activity type of review writing. Wine critics' writing is similar to critique of aesthetic phenomena such as literature, film or art in that it can be read in itself without necessarily involving the audience's consumption of the aesthetic product that is being reviewed. Simultaneously, favourable reviews can be understood to encourage consumption, e.g. to buy/read the book, see the film, drink the wine etc., whereas negative reviews may have the opposite function. The degree to which assessment of aesthetic phenomena can also be taken to encourage (or dissuade from) consumption varies. Compared to reviews of other artistic phenomena, wine reviews can be understood to involve a fairly strong association with consumption.

As observed in section 1.1, Parker's wine writing is described as a reaction to what he saw as the predominant type of wine writing of the time, which came closer to promoting wines than to critically assessing them (Agostini & Guichard 2007, McCoy 2005).<sup>22</sup> The presentation on *The Wine Advocate's* website tells us that the magazine "takes a hard, very critical look at wine". The intention of providing recommendations to actually consume (or not consume) the wines that are being reviewed is overtly articulated by means of the epithet 'consumer advocate', which Parker uses to designate his professional occupation. This position is also emphasized by his attitude towards wine as being "no different from any consumer product" (*The Wine Advocate. About The Wine Advocate*). In this respect, Parker's wine writing can be seen as instantiating the communicative activity type of 'consumer advocacy' or 'product control', activities which are manifestly related to the socio-culture of consumerism. The

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<sup>22</sup> Parker's texts are however often used by other actors in the wine business, e.g. producers or retailers, to promote wines that have received favourable evaluations, in which case they can be understood to realize the genre of promotion (see also the advertisement for Château Bouscaut 1999, reproduced in McCoy 2005, which employs allusion to a negative Parker assessment in order to promote the wine to French consumers: *...un bon vin de terroir ?...beaucoup de typicité...pas d'hésitation, une mauvaise note Parker !!!*) This communicative function of his texts is nonetheless secondary and is therefore not seen as part of the texts' original, externalized intention in the present study.

genre implementing this communicative activity type can be captured by the term ‘recommendation/consumption advice’ in the sense of being oriented towards the goal of providing the requisites of making an informed decision as to which investments should (not) be made in the future. The consumer’s rights are strongly emphasized as an important aspect of Parker’s discursive activity, a position which may not be so strongly accentuated by all wine critics.

While Parker himself employs the term ‘tasting notes’ to designate his writing on *The Wine Advocate’s* official website, I will be using the terms ‘tasting note’ and ‘wine review’ interchangeably throughout this study to refer to Parker’s texts, the intention being to indicate that they can be seen as occurrences of the register designated by the label tasting notes as well as instances of the more inclusive genre of review writing. The idea that a secondary purpose of Parker’s wine writing may simultaneously be to entertain and possibly also educate readers will not be assigned major importance in the analyses presented in the current study, which gives more prominence to the texts’ persuasiveness in relation to its externalized purpose (see section 1.2).

It is important to point out that, in contrast to the tasting notes that occur in for instance newspapers, which can also be seen to assess/recommend rather than promote, Parker’s tasting notes are only accessible for subscribers of *The Wine Advocate*. A yearly subscription of the print version currently costs \$75 (\$125 for overseas subscribers) while the online version of Parker’s wine magazine currently amounts to \$99.<sup>23</sup> Based on information from *The Wine Advocate* website, the bimonthly wine magazine has over 50,000 subscribers, in every state in the United States, and in over 37 foreign countries (*The Wine Advocate*. About Robert Parker). The fact that so many subscribers are willing to pay this amount of money in order to get access to Parker’s tasting notes, although other tasting notes concerning the same wines are available free of charge through other channels, for instance on the wine bottle itself or via the producer’s home page, is indicative of the importance that consumers assign to Parker’s texts in particular.<sup>24</sup> The high subscription cost also delimits Parker’s intended audience to an economically strong group that has the possibility and willingness to spend this amount of money for guidance concerning their consumption choices. In that sense, there is a connection between the socio-economical requisites that were related in the introduction (see chapter 1) and the distribution and accessibility of Parker’s texts. In other words, the subscrip-

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<sup>23</sup> The subscription costs that are provided in this section were verified on 8 July 2011.

<sup>24</sup> It should be pointed out that *The Wine Advocate* is not the only provider of tasting notes that are subscription-regulated. *Wine Spectator* and *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*, two other American wine magazines that are available online, charge \$49,95 and 29,95, respectively, for a yearly subscription. Among British wine writers, one year’s access to Jancis Robinson’s so called Purple pages for members only costs £69, which is currently equivalent to \$99. One year’s subscription to *Decanter*, which is a British print wine magazine, amounts to £54.

tion cost of *The Wine Advocate* can be seen as implicitly including and excluding audiences.

Furthermore, the following declaration on *The Wine Advocate* website functions to specify the audience towards which Parker's communicative endeavour is directed: "Irrefutably, the target audience is the wine consumer, not the wine trade" (*The Wine Advocate*. Wine Advocate writer standards). The group of wine consumers that subscribes to *The Wine Advocate* can thus be seen as explicitly positioned as Parker's intended or rhetorical audience (see section 1.2). In the context of Parker's wine reviews, besides the wine consumers that make up the intended audience, the actual audience, despite the declaration that the reviews target consumers, can nevertheless be expected to also involve wine producers and retailers, who, due to Parker's power to sway consumer preferences, keep up with Parker's assessments in order to make sure that their products correspond with his and hence important consumer groups' preferences, thereby preserving and increasing their market shares. According to the French wine writer Michel Bettane (interviewed in McCoy 2005:288), it is this actual audience of wine producers and not the intended audience of wine consumers that have led to the phenomenon called Parkerization, i.e. the ways in which Parker's wine reviews have been used by for instance profit-seeking Bordelais wine producers to make sure that their wines are in line with the wine guru's preferences. Steinberger (2007b) makes similar accusations against investors who speculate in highly praised wines so as to be able to push prices "skyward" and hence profiteer from "literal-minded Parker devotee's" craving for these products. Such wine investors could also be seen as part of Parker's actual audience, although they are not addressed as members of the intended audience. While keeping the idea of actual audience in mind, it is however the intended audience that is of prime importance for the present investigation, since this is the group of readers that the writer professes to have in mind when undertaking his communicative endeavour.

## 2.4 SUMMARY

The goal of this chapter has been to stage the current communicative phenomenon in its institutional and discursive setting. Section 2.1 provided a description of the wine tasting procedure and touched on a number of aspects related to biology, psychophysics, sociology and philosophy that make wine appreciation a highly multifaceted issue. The section also commented on consumers' need of authorities like Parker to guide their appreciation of wine. Section 2.2 gave a presentation of previous studies and commentary on the winespeak subtype termed the tasting note. Textual characteristics that were highlighted are the recommended and actual use of terminology, the exploitation of figurative expressions and the elliptic form of sentence construction. It was also observed that tasting notes have been found to have a highly conventionalized organization, giving an iconic reflection of the wine tasting procedure. Furthermore, ex-

perimental studies were related, which demonstrate that perceptual qualities of wines are not easily identified on the basis of linguistic expressions. In addition, the descriptors that are used to portray the smell of wine have a tendency to be influenced by the wine's colour. The section closed with an outline of previous comments about Parker's wine writing. In section 2.3, the wine tasting note was positioned with respect to the notions of genre and register. It was observed that winespeak occurs in a whole range of different spoken and written settings, and that the tasting note, which primarily features the perceptual experience of the wine, can be seen as a subcategory of the more inclusive field of winespeak. It was also noted that what I will be referring to as the register of the wine tasting note is found in different settings with distinct communicative goals, for instance on wine bottles as descriptions of the content, in advertisements and in assessments by wine critics, where it can be understood to enact distinct communicative goals and hence to implement distinct genres. The distinction between register and genre is thus analytically helpful in the present study. The section closed with a characterization of Parker's wine writing in terms of activity type and genre. The account also involved a discussion of how his reviews are made available to readers and how distributional factors can be understood to delimit and define the intended audience.



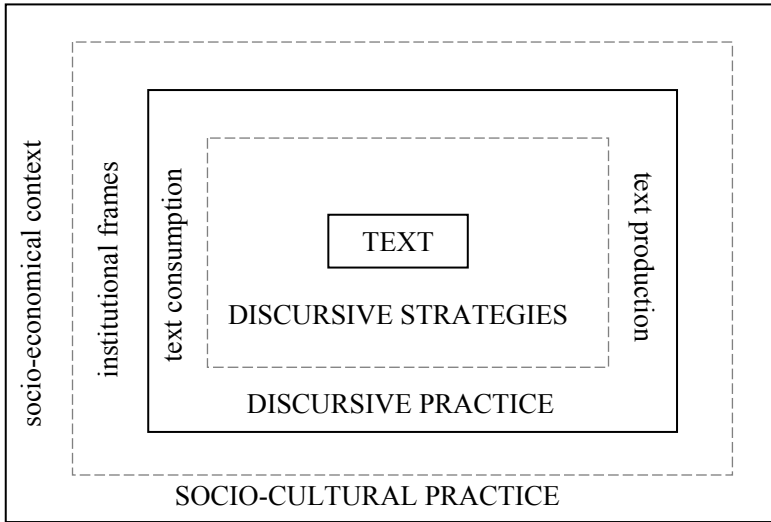
## **3 THEORY AND METHODOLOGY**

This chapter introduces the theoretical framework and methodological design underpinning the analyses of Parker's texts that will be undertaken in this study. The chapter is organized as follows: Section 3.1 presents the theory of discourse that permeates the present enquiry and functions to hold the analyses together. Section 3.2 describes the general methodology that has been adopted to carry out the investigation as well as the particular analytical tools that are used in the explorations of Parker's rhetorical endeavour. Finally, section 3.3 provides a chapter summary.

### **3.1 THE THEORY OF DISCOURSE**

In accordance with the ideas introduced in section 1.2, I assume that the persuasiveness of a text is intrinsically bound up with the discursive and socio-cultural context in which it takes place. Exploration of an individual's persuasive capacity is therefore dependent on the integration of available knowledge of the context of situation so as to result in an interpretation that is relevant and satisfactory in relation to the specific communicative interaction at hand. It is therefore considered vital to take into consideration understanding of socio-cultural practices, extra-linguistic requisites and discursive conventions in order to reveal textual structures that have the potential to be persuasive in a given context.

In order to frame this investigation, I have found it helpful to use Fairclough's (1992:73, 1995:59) model of a communicative event, which has been developed within the school of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Fairclough's model proposes a way to incorporate layers of contextual understanding in the analysis: A communicative event is seen as the simultaneous activation of three dimensions: text, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice, which figure 3:1 illustrates. It should be observed that this model is precisely a model, i.e. a simplified thought construct of a much more complex reality. Although it does not fully capture the complexity of the communicative event under study, it should nevertheless be seen as a tool to assist the discussion of the present topic.



**Figure 3:1 Model for analysis of a communicative event, adapted from Fairclough (1992:73, 1995:59)**

In the figure above, TEXT, which is seen as constituting the manifestation of spoken or written linguistic action, is located in the innermost box.<sup>25</sup> TEXT is understood to represent the materialized and hence stable and observable realization of communicative activity. A text does not occur in isolation but is part of the environment where it is produced and consumed, i.e. it is composed by someone and intended to be read, comprehended and accepted by someone. Surrounding TEXT, the discursive practice consists in the production and consumption of the textual message including discursive strategies used by speakers/writers to influence listeners/readers and interpretative strategies used by audiences to understand the message. Such strategies are dependent on mutual understanding of cultural norms which may be left unarticulated when the participants' shared insight can be taken for granted.

As clarified in section 1.2, my study of persuasiveness in Parker's texts does not involve real-world recipients' actual interpretive thought processes, but targets an imagined reader that the text constructs for itself, who interprets the text in accordance with what can be taken to be the addressor's externalized intentions. This thought-construct of the prospective addressee, which can be more or less consciously conjured by an addressor, has been referred to by means of

<sup>25</sup> TEXT can also be seen to subsume other modes than speech and writing, i.e. communication by means of for instance static and moving visual images or sound. These aspects of communication are becoming increasingly important in discourse research (see for instance Wodak & Meyer 2009).

various terms in the literature on the subject: Literary scholar Umberto Eco (1979:7) has coined the term ‘model reader’ to capture how the reader is modelled by the text in terms of for instance the choice of style and the amount of world knowledge ascribed to the reader. In a similar vein, Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969:19–20) see the audience as a more or less systematized construction of the speaker. The essence of these ideas is that a speaker out for rhetorical success will anticipate the audience’s beliefs, attitudes and possible oppositions and try to meet these supposed objections. Martin & White (2005:92) employ the term construed or putative reader. Fairclough (1995:122) uses the label ‘ideal interpreter’, an imagined reader “who will bring to bear just the propositions (the implicit meanings) needed to give the text what has been called its ‘preferred reading’”. In a similar vein, Tindale (2004:97) describes what he refers to as the intended or rhetorical audience as actively taking part in the discourse through the completion of the rhetorical message that their contribution entails. This phenomenon is referred to as ‘addressivity’ (Tindale 2004:96), a term which is also used by Martin & White (2005:208) to refer to “how authors locate themselves with respect to communities of shared feelings, tastes and values and how they present themselves as responding to, and anticipating the responses of, members of these attitudinal communities”.

According to Bitzer (1999[1968]:221), the intended or rhetorical audience “consists only of those persons who are capable of being influenced by discourse...”. On this view, people whose actions cannot be said to be within the scope of the persuasive attempt are not seen as part of the rhetorical audience: Canadian citizens watching the US presidential election campaign on American television would thus not be regarded as belonging to the rhetorical audience, since they are not allowed to vote in the American presidential election. Similarly, Tindale (2009:47) makes a distinction between intended audience and actual audience, a notion that includes those that are addressed by the rhetorical endeavour, whether intended or not. In addition to the notion of rhetorical or ideal audience, the idea of actual audience will also be of use in the analysis of Parker’s rhetorical endeavour.

The previous studies of winespeak that were related in section 2.2 have made it clear that the wine tasting note is a highly conventionalized register, which is confirmed by the very existence of the label ‘tasting note’. In the present study, the discursive strategies available to writers and audiences are seen as conditioned by prevalent norms within the field of discourse, and Parker’s writing is therefore understood to occur against a backdrop of other texts written in the same field. The writer’s persuasive strategies as well as the intended audience’s interpretive strategies, which the analyses attempt to reveal, are seen as dependent on mutual familiarity with such prevalent norms. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca give the following characterization of this phenomenon:

Every social circle or milieu is distinguishable in terms of its dominant opinions and unquestioned beliefs, of the premises that it takes for granted without hesita-

tion: these views form an integral part of its culture, and an orator wishing to persuade a particular audience must of necessity adapt himself to it (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:20–21).

The idea that language can be used to direct our attention towards one thing, while taking another more or less for granted and completely concealing a third is a significant aspect of the discursive strategies of persuasion that are the prime target of the present study. Fairclough describes the importance of taken-for-granted-ness as follows:

Implicitness is a pervasive property of texts, and a property of considerable social importance. All forms of fellowships, community and solidarity depend upon meanings which are shared and can be taken as given, and no form of social communication or interaction is conceivable without some such ‘common ground’. On the other hand, the capacity to exercise social power, domination and hegemony includes the capacity to shape to some significant degree the nature and content of this ‘common ground’, which makes implicitness and assumptions an important issue with respect to ideology (Fairclough 2003:55).

The theoretical perspective adopted in the present study is that the persuasiveness of a text arises in the communication between addressor and audience rather than as a function of the particular expressions chosen. Absences in the text’s surface form may therefore be of importance for the analysis alongside presences. Fairclough (2003:105) does not draw a sharp dividing line between explicitness and implicitness, but allows for a scale of presence from absent to foregrounded: absent – presupposed – backgrounded – foregrounded. It could be argued that an analysis partly based on cues that are not ‘there’ in the text to be observed is not ‘scientific’ since it is not ‘objective’. According to Fairclough, however, the idea that textual analysis can ever be objective is illusory:

There is no such thing as an ‘objective’ analysis of a text, if by that we mean an analysis which simply describes what is ‘there’ in the text without being ‘biased’ by the ‘subjectivity’ of the analyst. [...] Our ability to know what is ‘there’ is inevitably limited and partial (Fairclough 2003:14–15).

It is true that, even if only explicitly observable material is taken into consideration, a text provides the opportunity for an endless number of observations to be made, and without recourse to the context, it will be impossible to distinguish significant observations from those that are less pertinent.

In Fairclough’s model, extra-linguistic aspects of the discursive practice, e.g. how texts are made available for consumption, are also seen as elements of the discursive practice. This distinction is demarcated by means of a grey broken line in figure 3:1. As pointed out in section 2.3, the subscription cost of *The Wine Advocate* can be seen to function to construe the intended audience as an

economically privileged group that is able and inclined to spend money on this kind of consumption advice.

The outermost dimension of the communicative event, which embraces the discursive practice, incorporates the wider socio-cultural practice. As observed in chapter 1, the phenomenon under study is staged in an increasingly globalized consumerism culture, where fine wine has become a highly desirable product for an ever-larger number of consumers, “a cultural icon”, according to Caballero (2009:73). In addition to providing aesthetic and sensuous pleasures, overtly manifested choices of wine or other products can also function to provide consumers with the social identity that they want to project. Bourdieu (1984:57) observes that the exposure of such personal tastes to others can lead to anxiety of being classified by those who belong to the social group to which one aspires. Silverstein (2004:640) refers to this phenomenon as “a macrosociological regime of commodified identity [...] that calls upon people to voice an orientation of proclivities, desires and abilities with respect to them”. According to Silverstein (2004:639), the macrosocial dimension is essential in order to understand what he refers to as the microcontext of situation.

Wodak (2001:69) introduces the notions of “grand theories” to refer to a theoretical perspective of the wider socio-political environment of the communicative event under study and “middle-range theories” to denote a theoretical take on the more specific institutional frames within which the discursive event is set. In the present study, the label “grand theories” could be taken to subsume an economical perspective related to growth of the wine industry, a cultural perspective associated with preservation and disintegration of traditions in the world of wine and a sociological perspective of wine consumption, including unequal economical requisites of consumption and consumers’ purported desires and possibilities to construe their identity by consuming products that are seen as desirable by the social group to which they want to belong. This proposed sociological perspective does of course not only involve wine consumption but all forms of consumerism, a phenomenon that Stearns (2006) sees as a way of construing and conforming to shared goals, hence creating a sense of belonging in a larger global community.<sup>26</sup> “Middle-range theories” could be understood to incorporate psychophysical as well as philosophical approaches to wine, involving the human sensory apparatus and the debate over objectivity and subjectivity in wine tasting, an aspect of the present topic that was introduced in section 2.1.

The subject that is currently under investigation can be understood to subsume all of these perspectives. In accordance with Fairclough’s ideas, my un-

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<sup>26</sup> Fairclough (2006:21) discusses a new social division associated with globalization between ‘globals’, i.e. those who have the possibility to participate in the globalized community and as a result feel less obliged with respect to their place of origin, and ‘locals’, those that are confined to particular localities. The consumption of international luxury comestibles can be seen as a way of asserting one’s membership in the group of ‘globals’, thus distinguishing oneself from the ‘locals’.

derstanding of discourse is three-dimensional: Any communicative event is seen as simultaneously a piece of text, an instance of discursive practice, and an instance of socio-cultural practice. It should however be made clear that this study is to be seen as textually rather than socio-culturally oriented. Rather than an ambition to investigate the transformation of the French wine culture (Nossiter 2004) or a desire to highlight the blurring of identity and social status that goes with consumerism (Stearns 2006:154), my own interest in the current topic arises from a linguist's fascination with a skilful rhetorician's capacity to convince a world of consumers (and as a consequence many producers) to adopt his ideas about fine wine. I will therefore focus on the dimensions of text and discursive strategies. Still, it is indeed a thought-provoking socio-cultural issue that by their consumption choices, consumers are actively contributing to changes in a culture that simultaneously relies on its ancient traditions of mystique, aristocracy and sophistication in order to be perceived as attractive by the very same consumers.

A central issue in many discourse studies is the concept of power. While the focus of CDA-oriented studies is generally abusive power (Martin & Wodak 2003:4), which is understood as the opportunity for an individual to "achieve his or her own will even against the resistance of others" (Wodak & Meyer 2009:9), other approaches to discourse studies are less strongly censorious. Blommaert (2005:1) expounds on the notion of power and questions whether it can be seen indisputably as a bad thing. According to Blommaert, it can be argued that "power is necessary in every system, for it is often that which allows the system to function in particular ways, without which the system would disintegrate or cease to operate effectively". Blommaert (2005:1) argues that the goal of critical discourse analysis should not be a one-sided criticism of power, but an exploration of the "outcome of power, of what power *does to* people, groups and societies, and of *how* this impact comes about". Billig (2008), who also debates the notion of power, questions what he finds to be a prevailing idea in the CDA research community, namely that CDA researchers can be understood to have a special moral status that allows them to distinguish between power use and abuse.<sup>27</sup> Martin (2000a:285) acknowledges that "enacting power is not necessarily a bad thing", and introduces the notion of PDA (positive discourse analysis) alongside CDA (Martin & Wodak 2003:4), presumably as a reaction against what he sees as a negative and condemnatory orientation that

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<sup>27</sup> The position with respect to the label 'critical' varies among researchers working within the school of CDA. Van Dijk (2008) for instance, adopts an action-oriented perspective and proposes that a study carried out within this programme (van Dijk's label is CDS, Critical Discourse Studies) should be able to contribute actively to social change. Wodak & Meyer (2009:7) define critical as "making visible the interconnectedness of things". According to Wodak & Meyer (2009:2) the idea that only negative or 'serious' social and political phenomena are suitable topics of investigation for CDA-oriented studies is a misconception: "Any social phenomenon lends itself to critical investigation, to be challenged and not taken for granted."

has come, justly or not, to be associated with CDA. Martin (2000a:297) argues that “[discourse analysts] have to spend less time looking at discourses which oppress and more time looking at discourses which challenge, subvert, renovate and liberate” and calls for “some celebratory discourse analysis alongside our critique!”

Given the ideological overtones often associated with studies in discourse analysis, it is felt important to state that as an analyst I have no ethical objections to Parker’s discursive activity, and my intention is not to point out what is the morally correct or incorrect course of action. Instead of adopting either a judgemental or acclamatory position towards Parker’s rhetorical enterprise as either power abuse or benevolent exertion of righteous power that “challenges, subverts, renovates and liberates”, my analysis of Parker’s writing proceeds from the idea that his unprecedented power in the wine world is intrinsically bound up with a complex set of interrelated forces, which are perhaps ultimately connected to a basic human need to share experiences and values so as to create a sense of belonging (Stearns 2006:158). It is consumers who have felt the need for a leader and who have appointed Parker ‘Emperor of wine’, not Parker himself. The ultimate power in the present context can therefore be said to lie in the hands of the consumer. For Foucault (cited in Herrick 2005:247), power is something that installs *itself*, not a result of individuals’ conscious or intentional decisions. McCoy considers timing to be an essential aspect of the Parker phenomenon: Parker happened to be the right person at the right time in the right place; the consequences of his venture were not part of any initial scheme of his (McCoy 2005:53).<sup>28</sup>

### 3.2 METHODOLOGY

When undertaking discourse analysis, there is a need to find the analytical tools that are appropriate for the specific communicative phenomenon at hand. According to van Dijk (2008:2), there is no strictly fixed method for doing discourse studies: Parameters that may affect the choice of avenue are for instance “the aim of the investigation, the nature of the data studied, the interests and the qualifications of the researcher and other parameters of the research context”. The general methodology when performing contextually situated discourse analysis is necessarily complex, involving a hermeneutic process, a procedure that Meyer (2001:16) as well as Wodak & Meyer (2009:22) define as follows:

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<sup>28</sup> Although acknowledging that the consequences of Parker’s enterprise were not part of an initial plan, McCoy nevertheless does hold him partly responsible, arguing that “it’s indigenous for Parker to say that there is nothing he can do about the power and influence he wields” (2005:298). Steinberger (2007b), who deplores the development of the world of wine caused by the influence of Parker’s assessments, does not blame Parker but greedy investors that profit from newly enriched would-be elite consumers who are embracing oenophilia.

[H]ermeneutics can be understood as the method of grasping and producing meaning relations. The hermeneutic circle – which implies that the meaning of one part can only be understood in the context of the whole, but that this in turn is only accessible from its component parts – indicates the problem of intelligibility of hermeneutic interpretation.

The goal of hermeneutic research is not to verify or falsify hypotheses but to arrive at a more profound understanding of the target subject. Wodak (2001:70) describes the process of performing this type of analysis as a constant movement between different levels of the target subject: from the isolated expression in the text to the immediate co-text to the discursive context, to the wider socio-cultural context and back to the isolated expression. This correlates with the approach of the present study.

Studies in discourse analysis often involve interdisciplinary research which enables the investigation of different angles of the topic (Wodak 2001:69, Martin & Wodak 2003:6). Although my investigation cannot be formally defined as part of an interdisciplinary research project, the ambition has been to integrate insights from the sociology of taste and consumption as well as the philosophy and psychophysics of wine in order to arrive at a deeper understanding of the complexity of the target subject. Knowledge about the perspectives of these disciplines on the present subject has been acquired by engaging with what has been felt to be relevant literature, a research strategy proposed by Fairclough (2009:169). It should however be made clear that I do not claim to have scientific expertise in these areas, and the interpretation of these dimensions therefore by no means pretends to be exhaustive.

Furthermore, it is also important to declare that, although I enjoy wine, I do not consider myself to be an expert member of the discourse community under study. On the one hand, it has its apparent drawbacks to study texts that are part of a discourse community of which the analyst is not a proficient member. In order to recognize and try to reveal the texts' potential persuasiveness it is first necessary to find ways of interpreting what is plausibly the intended meaning of words and expressions in what has been characterized as a jargon reflecting the mystique of wine (Caballero 2009:74) or even idiot-speak (Gluck 2003:107). On the other hand, the fact that the analyst has an outsider's perspective may also be advantageous because it may result in a highlighting of features that a more field-initiate text interpreter might not take note of precisely because they are taken for granted as self-evident. In order to make the current investigation as illuminating as possible, a diversity of different types of field-relevant sources has been consulted to assist the analysis, e.g. glossaries of wine terminology, websites presenting the estates whose wines the reviews deal with as well as general wine guides. In addition, non-scientific articles, books and documentaries about Parker and the wine world in general are also taken into consideration in the analysis insofar as they contribute to providing understanding of the phenomenon under study.



According to Johnstone (2000:60), a general methodological problem of discourse research is to assess the quality of the findings. Analysts cannot actually prove that they are right, since the traditional notions of validity, reliability and representativeness are not applicable to problem-oriented interpretive analysis. An idea that has been introduced is accessibility, which requires that findings should be readable for members of the discourse community that is the target of examination. As pointed out in section 1.2, it is my ambition to make the presentation as accessible as possible, not only for linguists and argumentation scholars with different theoretical academic traditions and foci, but also for members of the discourse community of wine. Another proposed criterion is ‘completeness’, which stipulates that “the results of a study will be ‘complete’ if new data and the analysis of new linguistic devices reveal no new findings” (Wodak & Meyer 2009:31). The possibility of fulfilling the criterion of completeness will be further discussed in the evaluation of the methodological outcomes of this study (see section 8.2). Johnstone (2000:60) observes that despite the potential problem of assessing the results, the ‘plausible’ outcome of qualitative studies can nevertheless provide important insights into how language and society works.

As indicated in section 1.2, the present investigation proposes to examine three perspectives of the intangible phenomenon of persuasiveness in Parker’s wine writing, persuasiveness in representations, argumentation and appraisal, each of which is understood to contribute an essential piece of the current research puzzle. The methodological approach adopted with respect to the material under investigation involves exploration of a relatively large data set from which a limited number of entire texts are extracted for the presentation of detailed interpretive analysis. An advantage of the presentation of extended passages of the original materials in discourse research is that this exhibition makes the analytical process transparent, allowing the reader to follow and thereby assess the analyst’s interpretations (Potter 2007:322). The analytic procedure is thereby made open for potential questioning and criticism.

Exploration of persuasiveness poses a number of challenging methodological problems, since the persuasive potential is not taken to reside in particular words or expressions, but understood to be construed on the basis of the immediate co-text as well as the wider discursive and socio-cultural context. In this study of Parker’s wine writing, I propose to employ a combination of three different analytical methods that are designed to highlight different aspects of the target of investigation. The sets of analytical tools that will be employed are understood to be appropriate for the present study, which seeks to make systematic observations so as to be able to reveal patterns and illuminate the relationship between such patterns, thereby shedding light on Parker’s discursive persona, the prospective audience that the text conjures as well as the preferred world view that the texts encourage. In the following sections, I introduce the analytical tools that will be used to assist the investigations. The presentation also involves brief accounts of the theoretical origins of these analytical meth-

ods. From the perspective of this study, it is considered advantageous not to be confined by the limitations of a particular linguistic theory, but to be able to profit from the knowledge gained from combining different theoretical paradigms. The paradigms that are combined have been understood to be theoretically compatible insofar as they promote the study of authentic text rather than constructed sentences and are designed to deal with language in use for communicative purposes.

### 3.2.1 ANALYSIS OF REPRESENTATIONS

For Fairclough (2003:104), the analysis of representations involves “an account of what choices are made – what is included and what is excluded, what is made explicit and what is left implicit, what is foregrounded and what is backgrounded, what is thematized and what is unthematized, what process types and categories are drawn on to represent events, and so on”. The analysis of representations is based on the idea that “when speakers/writers represent in language events, actions, relationships and states, the people and objects involved in them, the time and place and other circumstances of their occurrence [...] there are always choices available in grammar and vocabulary” (1995:109). Furthermore, Fairclough (1995:114) proposes that alternative ways of representing reality may correspond to different categorizations. According to Fairclough, representations can be seen as recontextualizations of social practice that inevitably entail transformations so that “the same social practice [...] will be differently recontextualized, and differently transformed, in different texts (Fairclough 1995:115, see also van Leeuwen 1993).

In order to accommodate Fairclough’s suggested areas of investigation, the analysis of representations that is carried out in the present study involves an exploratory approach to Parker’s wine writing, involving a relatively large number of texts, as well as a brief characterization of the visual resources drawn on to receive the reader who enters *The Wine Advocate* homepage. To provide a first tentative overview of what is included and what is potentially excluded from the material at hand, Caballero’s organization schema for wine tasting notes, which was represented in figure 2:1, will be employed as a tool to help displaying the frequency of occurrence of different types of contents. This primary content analysis enables observation of what kind of information is more or less typically included in Parker’s wine writing and also an idea about the kind of information that could perhaps have been included but is not.

Furthermore, the content analysis is complemented by what I have chosen to label thematic analysis, which highlights the schematic structure of Parker’s tasting notes in terms of a headline and recurrent units of thematic meaning, based on the events that the texts are understood to recontextualize.<sup>29</sup> The divi-

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<sup>29</sup> A tentative exploration of the thematic units of Parker’s wine reviews was presented at the conference Forum för textforskning, Växjö University, 12 June 2007.

sion into thematic units representing different events is not based only on overt lexical or grammatical realizations of processes and participants in terms of verbs and nominal groups, but also takes into consideration indications which are left unsaid in the text, relying on the discourse community's common-sense assumptions and capacity to make inferences. The analysis will evolve around a number of notions that are understood to distinguish the thematic units from one another.

Firstly, the notion of temporality is taken to be an important factor to distinguish between the different thematic units that Parker's reviews are made up of. In accordance with the position taken in the present analysis, I will not rely solely on overt linguistic features that can contribute to the construction of temporality, e.g. the tense and aspect of verbs, adverbials, conjunctions and prepositions, to determine whether a statement is located in past, present or future time but will also take implicit inference-based clues into consideration. According to Fairclough (2003:151) the construction of time is closely interconnected with the construction of space. Analysis of a communicative event can therefore attend to how different space-times are connected to each other as well as to the speaker's position with respect to these space-times.

Second, another notion that will be of importance to distinguish the thematic units is the type of evidence on which the presentation is based. Indication of the source or type of evidence is generally referred to in the linguistics literature as evidentiality, a concept which, according to Jaszczolt (2009:39), is highly contentious, its definition ranging from being delimited to overtly realized grammatical morphemes with source of information as their core meaning to a recognition that the source of information can be left implicit since it is expected to be inferred on the basis of the context without the presence of explicit indicators. Research on grammatically and lexically realized evidentiality has resulted in a division into three distinct types of evidentiality: Cornillie (2009:46) lists the following modes of knowing, 1. sensorial or visual evidence, 2. inference and 3. hearsay.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the source of these modes of knowing is either the speaker or other types of evidence. Based on Chafe & Nichols 1986, Viberg (2001:1306) proposes that evidentials are related to a reliability hierarchy which takes as point of departure the addressee's assessment of the degree of reliability of the different perceptual modalities when these are used as sources of evidence in communication: The speaker's participation in an event is understood by the addressee to be more reliable than the speaker's direct perception of this event, which in turn is more reliable than indirect perception, i.e. inference based on sensory input. Least reliable is evidence that emanates from sources that are external to the writer. In the analysis of repre-

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<sup>30</sup> According to Cornillie (2009:46), for instance Native American and Eurasian languages have an obligatory grammatical evidential system in which evidentials surface as affixes. In most European languages, evidentials are often expressed lexically, for instance by means of adverbs, e.g. *allegedly* (hearsay) or *presumably* (inference) (Cornillie (2009:46).

sentations, I take the widest possible definition of evidentiality to be of most pertinent interest, i.e. the discussion of evidentiality will not be based exclusively on overtly realized grammatical or lexical indications, but will also take into consideration that the mode of knowing as well as the source of information may be left implicit, relying on the discourse community's contextual understanding as well as general world knowledge. This position is based on the fact that it is common in argumentative texts for the authorial voice to internalize information that originates from external sources and present itself as responsible for the proposition (Martin & White 2005:117). This inclusive interpretation of the notions of temporality and evidentiality is consistent with the basic assumption that underpins the present study, i.e. that meaning is not tied to specific linguistic items but is construed on the basis of co-text as well as context. The notions of temporality and evidentiality are closely related to the idea of epistemic modality, which will also be of importance for the analytical process of distinguishing the thematic units in Parker's wine reviews.

Having established the thematic units as the primary targets of analysis in the study of representations, the exploratory investigation of Parker's wine writing proceeds to consider the linguistic realization of the different thematic units. According to Fairclough (1995:109–110), it is important to take note of systematic patterns of low-level choices in particular discourse types since such choices may have significant ideological effects. The observation and description of linguistic realization draw on the model for transitivity analysis proposed by Halliday & Matthiessen (2004), a model of analysis that is often used in studies carried out in the framework of CDA (see e.g. Wodak & Meyer 2009). The system of transitivity highlights the ideational component of discourse semantics in the Systemic Functional Linguistic (henceforth SFL) model of language, and relies on a combination of common sense and grammar (Thompson 2004:89). The SFL model for transitivity analysis allows the linguistic realization of events in terms of processes and participants to be highlighted. The presentation in chapter 5 assumes some previous familiarity with the categories of transitivity devised by SFL. For readers that are not familiar with this system, illuminating examples serve the function of illustrating discussed categories. Given the elliptic nature of wine tasting notes, a characteristic feature of the register that has previously been noted by Thibault (2004:222, see section 2.2 above), a complete transitivity analysis could involve addition of elided processes and participants in the manner that Thibault suggests. In the present study, I have however chosen to delimit the transitivity analysis to the process types that are realized by finite verbs in the three thematic units. This choice will be justified below, where the usefulness of the SFL model of transitivity for the present material will be tested and questioned. I will also bring into the discussion the notion of 'grammatical metaphor, or more specifically 'ideational metaphor', according to which the surface form of the message cap-

tures events and participants in ways that are not congruent with the real world situation that is portrayed by the text.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, the analysis of representations also provides an account of the visual resources that meet the reader on *The Wine Advocate* homepage before the wine reviews can be accessed. The outline of these resources has been inspired by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), who provide analytical tools to interpret the relationship that images construct with the viewer, involving the visual material's potential significance for the construction of power relations. According to Kress & van Leeuwen (2006:117–118), images involving represented participants are understood to establish different types of relationships depending on whether or not the represented participant meets the viewer's gaze or not. Furthermore, Kress & van Leeuwen (2006:124–129) provide ideas as to how to analyze the size of frame, distinguishing between close-up, medium shot and long shot, as well as the vertical angle of the shot, from above, below or the point of eye level.

The analysis of representations, which involves a relatively extensive selection of texts as well as an overview of the presentational resources by means of which the texts are framed, functions as a crucial backdrop for the subsequent analyses, which explore the material from the analytical perspectives of argumentation theory and Appraisal theory.

### 3.2.2 ANALYSIS OF ARGUMENTATION

The basic theoretical assumption of argumentation pertains to the fact that it does not take place in isolation exclusively in the speaker's mind, but is a fundamentally social activity, which is "aimed at convincing the listener or reader of the acceptability of the standpoint" (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004:2). Argumentation is studied within a variety of disciplines, e.g. logic, philosophy, linguistics, psychology, law etc., which means that the field has become highly diversified. The investigation of argumentation can for instance be aimed at revealing highly abstract argumentative components or evaluating the reason-

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<sup>31</sup> A basic idea in SFL is the organization of language into different strata, which resembles and has inspired the dimensions in Fairclough's model of a communicative event (see figure 3.1). The core idea is that linguistic patterns on the more concrete, subordinate stratum represent realizations of the super-ordinate stratum (Martin & Rose 2003:5) so that the stratum of social context is realized by discourse semantics, which in turn is realized through lexico-grammatical structures. Another basic component of SFL is the idea that language in use in social activity involves three types of meanings, so called metafunctions, which operate simultaneously in every act of communication: ideational, interpersonal and textual meaning. These metafunctions cut across all the language strata. The ideational metafunction concerns the representation of reality in terms of human experience of the world as well as logical connections between ideas. The interpersonal metafunction refers to the ways in which language is used to establish social relations. Finally, the textual metafunction relates to coherence in text. These three metafunctions are understood to operate simultaneously in all instances of language use. The system of transitivity is designed to highlight the ideational metafunction of the stratum of discourse semantics (Martin & Rose 2003:7). For a theoretical outline of SFL, see for instance Halliday & Matthiesen (2004), Martin & Rose (2003), Martin & White (2005).

ableness of the arguments that are presented in support of a standpoint.<sup>32</sup> Tindale (2004:xi) summarizes the diversity of interests among argumentation theorists as follows:

Approaches to argumentation vary from those that lay emphasis on the logical product, the “argument”, that results; to those that investigate the procedures involved in argumentative exchanges, exploring and devising rules to facilitate this; to those that stress the processes involved in the argumentative exchanges between arguers and audiences.

Tindale (2004:6) argues that the first two of these approaches to the study of argumentation do not take into account “what is said” in relation to “who is saying it and why”. The third perspective, however, emphasizes the importance of the context in which the argumentation takes place. The present study can be said to adopt the third of these perspectives: The goal of the current argumentation analysis is to provide a detailed scrutiny of a contextually situated argumentative phenomenon so as to be able to display how the argumentation in Parker’s texts contributes to their persuasiveness in relation to the audience that is addressed. In other words, it is regarded as fundamental to anchor the analysis in the situational context, but the exploration of logical validity or argumentative rules based on rationality, which are essential aspects of normative approaches to argumentation, will not be assigned major importance.

According to van Eemeren & Grootendorst (2004:97), there are no univocal criteria to determine whether or not a discourse or text can be considered argumentative. Martin & Rose (2003:11) divide argumentative genres into two groups: The argument genre of exposition, which involves a thesis and arguments to support this thesis, and the argument genre of discussion, where two or more points of view are presented. The first of these argument genres is monologic, while the second is dialogic. However, Martin & White (2005:208) make it clear that even so called monologic texts are fundamentally dialogic in that they “locate themselves with respect to communities of shared feelings, tastes and values” and “present themselves as responding to, and anticipating responses to, members of these attitudinal communities”. Fairclough (2003:41–42) suggests that social interactions vary in the degree to which they emphasize the difference of opinion that is at stake and proposes a cline of argumentativity from complete recognition of and openness about meaning differences to a

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<sup>32</sup> Van Eemeren et al. (1996) present an historical overview and a summary of contemporary perspectives with philosophical as well as communicative orientation. A very influential argumentation model designed by Toulmin (1958), for instance, involves the abstract notions Grounds, Warrants, Claim and Backing, but less interest is devoted to the detailed texturing of the argumentation (Fairclough (2003:82). Tindale (2004, 2009) provides a critical assessment of normative argumentation models, for instance the pragma-dialectical approach, from the perspective of rhetorical argumentation theory inspired by Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca (1969).

normalization that suppresses differences of opinion and norms. The idea that Parker's wine reviews constitute occurrences of argumentation may not strike the reader at first glance. However, the fact that Parker presents his activity as a critical consumer advocate as warranted in order to protect consumers from being misled by other, perhaps less conscientious, knowledgeable and serious, wine reviewers invokes the idea that there is a potential difference of opinion in the wine world regarding the wines that are reviewed in *The Wine Advocate*. The purported antagonist that Parker's argumentation is designed to convince can be thought of in terms of a sceptical consumer, who requires the standpoint to be substantiated before being convinced about its tenability. To include discourse that is not apparently argumentative, Tindale promotes the study of rhetorical or dialogical argumentation, which emphasizes "the way a speaker addresses an audience already anticipating a reply in the very words that are used" (Tindale 2004:23), i.e. how "differences of [the] participants are lost in the commonalities that underlie the exchanges" (Tindale 2004:114, footnote 1). The basic approach to the study of argumentation adopted in the present study correlates with the ideas put forward by Tindale (2004:20):

The processes of rhetorical argumentation meld together [*ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*] bringing into relief, and inextricably wedding to one another in the argumentative situation, the arguer, audience, and "argument". To understand argumentation is to understand the interactions of these components; to evaluate argumentation is to do the same.

In order to transfer an argumentative message designed to convince the addressee to accept a particular standpoint or thesis, rhetorically aware arguers can be expected to capture the content of this message in a linguistic form that serves their persuasive intentions as effectively as possible. The recipient of the message is thereby presented with a unified impression, where it can be difficult to see that the form in which the content is dressed up is not self evident, but the result of more or less conscious and more or less strategic choices. By means of argumentation analysis, the distinction between the content of the message and the form in which it is presented can be revealed. The content is thereby abstracted from the text. The text or surface form of the message, which is the only evidence available to the argumentation analyst, nevertheless provides the raw material on which the analytical abstraction of the content is based.<sup>33</sup>

The study of argumentation comprises both explicit and implicit assumptions that are taken for granted as points of departure for the argumentation, the

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<sup>33</sup> Van Eemeren & Grootendorst (2004) as well as Wodak & Meyer (2009:22) use the term 'deep structure' to designate the meaning underlying the linguistic surface form of the message. In order not to give rise to theoretical associations with generative transformation grammar, this term has been avoided here.

standpoints, i.e. the issue that the argumentation deals with, the arguments for or against the standpoint and the structure of the argumentation, i.e. the way in which different arguments are connected.

The present study employs the analytical tools provided by argumentation theory in order to decipher Parker's wine reviews so that the standpoints, the arguments, the argumentation structure as well as the argument schemes and underlying *topoi* that support them can be revealed, the purpose being to acquire enhanced knowledge regarding the persuasiveness of Parker's argumentation. The term 'argument scheme' refers to the type of justification relation on which an argument builds, for instance a symptomatic relation, a comparison relation or a consequence relation. Van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1992:96) provide the following examples as illustrations of these three argument schemes:

Symptomatic argumentation: *As Daniel is an American, he is sure to be concerned about the costs* (It is typical of Americans that they are materialistic)

Analogical argumentation: *The method I propose worked last year, so it will work again* (We are now faced with the same problem as last year).

Instrumental argumentation: *Tom has been drinking an excessive amount of whisky, so he must have a terrible headache* (Heavy drinking is bound to cause a terrible headache).

In authentic argumentation, it is not always evident that such argument schemes have been applied since overt cues are missing. In the analysis of Parker's argumentation, the ambition is nonetheless to attempt to reveal such argument schemes and relate them to the issue of persuasiveness. In addition to the argument schemes proposed by the pragma-dialectical model of argumentation, I will also attempt to demonstrate the relevance of ethotic argumentation, which is based on the idea that "the good person's speech is more credible" (Walton 1996:86) as well as the argument scheme of allusion (Tindale 2004:76), which draws on a relation of association to reinforce the credibility of the standpoint.

The argument that is put forward can also rely on a completely implicit *topos*. The following definition of *topoi*, which has been considered useful in the present context, is provided by Anscombe & Ducrot (1989:80): *Topoi* are presupposed argumentative principles, i.e. topics or ideas about which there is supposedly general agreement, which are dependent on the particular discourse community within which the argumentation takes place. An argumentative *topos* can for instance be an interrelation between two scalar systems. As an illustration, the following example demonstrates how the scale of goodness is combined with the scale of cost in two different ways:



*That restaurant is cheap, let's go there.* (The less expensive it is, the better deal it is.)

*That restaurant is expensive, let's not go there.* (The more expensive it is, the less a good deal it is.)

In order to render such implicit values observable, the analyst needs to resort to contextual understanding and interpretation. Furthermore, it should be declared that the argumentation analysis does not aspire to arrive at an understanding of the psychological disposition or emotional state of the arguer. An important principle when conducting argumentation analysis is externalization (see section 1.2). Consequently, the research strategy adopted in the present study is to accept the fact that the argumentation analysis cannot give a true reflection of the writer's internalized intentions. The analytical tools nonetheless allow the analyst to arrive at a specific reading of the argumentation, displaying argumentative patterns of which the writer need not necessarily have been aware.

I have already indicated that unless all the components of an argumentation are realized by means of unequivocal textual markers, which is generally not the case (van Eemeren et al. 1996:20), argumentation analysis requires reconstruction of the message's original formulations in order to reveal the arguments and their hierarchical structure.<sup>34</sup> An 'argumentative proposition' is then assigned to the 'formulation'. While the term 'formulation' refers to the actual linguistic expressions that writers select to capture what they want to say, an 'argumentative proposition' consists in the raw material, i.e. the core of the idea that the formulation can be understood to present. Put simply, the analytical method consists in extracting and capturing the raw material, i.e. the argumentative proposition, by means of other, simplified expressions, which are arrived at through operations of transformation.

For the reconstruction of the argumentative organization of Parker's wine reviews, the tools provided by the pragma-dialectical model, which has been developed by van Eemeren and his research group (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992, van Eemeren et al. 1993, van Eemeren et al. 2002, van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004) are used. According to Sigrell (1999:40), it is important to keep in mind that theoretical models are necessarily idealized and should not be seen as enabling true reflections of real world argumentation. They can nevertheless provide points of departure for reflective analysis. While the argumentative organization of the wine reviews is reconstructed using the analytical tools provided by pragma-dialectics, it should be made clear that only the analytical tools that have been considered useful with respect to the current research focus

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<sup>34</sup> The term 'reconstruction' may seem misleading, since it suggests a procedure that restores into its original shape an argumentative organization that has previously been deconstructed when the message was formulated. For reasons of convenience, I have nonetheless chosen to retain this term since it is widely used in the pragma-dialectical literature.

have been adopted.<sup>35</sup> I do not attempt to determine which elements of the texts are relevant or irrelevant for the resolution of a difference of opinion on rational grounds, but regard all the elements included in the texts to have potential argumentative significance.

The pragma-dialectical model introduces a number of specific operations to be applied in the reconstruction of argumentative discourse. The following transformations are identified: deletion, addition, substitution and permutation (see e.g. van Eemeren et al. 1996:291, van Eemeren et al. 1993:61–62, van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2002:103–104).<sup>36</sup> Deletion refers to removal of unnecessary repetitions and other redundant elements, such as elaborations, clarifications and sidetracks. In the present study, such elements as repetitions can however be regarded as having a significant function in reinforcing the urgency of the argument and will therefore not be dealt with by means of the transformation of deletion. Through addition, the text's original formulations are complemented by elements that are not explicitly realized. This transformation applies to elliptical elements that can be retrieved from the text as well as the reconstruction of implicit premises for which contextual information is required, including “unexpressed premises, unexpressed conclusions, anticipated doubt, and so on, that are hidden in indirectness, presuppositions, or elliptical and other sorts of implicit formulations” (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2002:109). An example of addition of implicit material that is imminent in the present context is the reconstruction of *topoi*, i.e. communal values that are taken for granted as points of departure for the argumentation as well as argument schemes, which are indicated by the text. The transformation of substitution consists in replacing non-standard, vague or ambiguous formulations by more precise standard phrases. In addition, this transformation can be used to reveal the fact that different formulations can function to express the same argumentative proposition, i.e. by means of the transformation of substitution “parts that fulfil the same function [are] represented in exactly the same way” (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004:109). The transformation of substitution is an important aspect of the reconstructions that are performed in the present study: The transformation of substitution is used to decipher equivocal formulations so that these are replaced by reconstructions that are unambiguous, i.e. that can only be interpreted in one way. This sometimes means that condensed formulations

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<sup>35</sup> Van Eemeren and Grootendorst's pragma-dialectical reconstruction model is resolution-oriented, i.e. the ultimate purpose is to investigate how a resolution of a difference of opinion is most effectively arrived at on rational grounds, which means that it is designed to deal with normative evaluation of argumentative discourse. The model relies on a number of principles for conducting critical discussions (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004:187–196), which constitute the basis for determining which components of the discourse are to be considered argumentatively relevant for the resolution process.

<sup>36</sup> Interestingly, van Leeuwen (2009:150) uses the same terms as the pragma-dialectical school (deletion, substitution, addition) to designate the reversed process, i.e. the transformations that speakers are understood to perform when they capture socio-cultural practices in textual formulations.

need to be transformed into several argumentative propositions. Finally, permutation entails rearrangement of the original text so that the elements appear in a different order, i.e. by means of permutation, the elements should be reordered in such a way that “an optimal picture is given” (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004:109). In the present study, the transformation of permutation is used for instance to disentangle strings of linguistic expressions and rearrange them so as to make it clear that the different items belong to different levels in the argumentative hierarchy. Since the texts in my material are highly condensed, it is sometimes necessary to simultaneously apply several of these transformation types in order to arrive at an adequate reconstruction. While the transformation operations will be exemplified and discussed in the analysis, the different types of reconstructions that are performed will not be assigned major importance in this investigation.

Reconstruction of argumentative discourse does not only involve transformation operations of individual arguments, but also entails positioning these arguments within the whole of the argumentation, i.e. the argumentation structure. According to van Eemeren & Grootendorst (2004:119), argumentation can be structured in several different ways, e.g. as single, multiple or compound argumentation. In order to clarify the structure of the argumentation, I employ the pragma-dialectic notation system, according to which the main arguments and sublevel arguments are numbered so as to clarify their internal relation. In addition, main and sublevel arguments are referred to as first-order, second-order and third-order arguments in accordance with their suppositional position in the argumentative hierarchy. The different types of argumentation structures will be discussed and exemplified throughout the analyses, where the potential communicative significance of different ways of organizing the argumentation will be observed.

It should be made clear that the transformation operations do not provide clear-cut, definitive rules as to how to carry out reconstruction of argumentative discourse so as to guarantee that different analysts will arrive at identical reconstructions, i.e. the abstraction of the argumentative organization still relies heavily on the analyst’s subjective ideas of what would constitute a reasonable interpretation of the formulations used by the arguer. When argumentative discourse is reconstructed it is therefore crucial that the transformations performed are justifiable in relation to the arguer and the context in which the argumentation takes place. An over-interpretation of implicit elements risks attributing to the arguer an externalized commitment for which he cannot be held responsible. Argumentation analysis should nevertheless strive to go beyond a naive reading of the discourse. An ultimate reconstruction should involve both logical analysis, in which for instance implicit connectives are supplemented, and pragmatic analysis, where reconstruction relies on available contextual information and background knowledge. Van Eemeren & Grootendorst issue the following recommendation regarding the justification of reconstructions:

It is important to realize that in these matters, no single source of justification can stand all by itself. All the indications can only function as such in the light of an adequate knowledge of the nature and cultural significance of the speech event in which they occur. Another important consideration is that the value of a reconstruction in the end never depends entirely on how it can be empirically justified in this particular case, but also on the degree to which the reconstruction offers a coherent analysis that provides an explanation for the specific characteristics of the discourse or text and agrees with what else is known about the matter at issue, about (combinations of) other speech acts of the same type, and about the course of verbal communication in general (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004:111–112).

These recommendations are summarized by means of the following principle: “The transformations that are carried out must be accounted for by referring to explicit or implicit clues in argumentative reality” (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 2004:110). The recommendations articulated by van Eemeren & Grootendorst serve as guidelines in the present study, where the exploratory overview of the material provided by the preceding analysis of representations provides a foundation against which the argumentation analysis can be contested in order to ensure a coherent analysis.

Argumentation analysis can never aspire to provide a ‘correct’ representation of a message’s argumentative organization, and in that sense cannot be seen as an objective scientific method. Instead, the goal should be to arrive at an interpretation that can be perceived as ‘reasonable’ in relation to the discourse community where the argumentation takes place (van Eemeren et al. 1996:87, Sigrell 1999:36). Different analysts may therefore arrive at different results depending on divergent purposes with the investigation or discrepancies in contextual understanding. In order to take this potential methodological deficit into consideration, an important aspect of the approach has been to test the tenability of the interpretation of sample texts in seminar sessions with other analysts so as to ensure an account of the argumentation in Parker’s wine reviews that is intersubjectively intelligible and acceptable.<sup>37</sup>

The argumentation analysis takes the linguistic expressions or formulations as point of departure and aims to elucidate the arguments that they instantiate, the structure that these arguments are part of and the argument schemes and *topoi* on which they are based, thus attempting to abstract the meaning content

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<sup>37</sup> In order to test the tenability of my application of the pragma-dialectical model to Parker’s writing, a sample analysis of one of Parker’s reviews was presented to the research group at the Department of Speech Communication, Argumentation Theory and Rhetoric, the University of Amsterdam on 5 March 2010. The usefulness of the combination of argumentation analysis and Appraisal analysis as a way of investigation the current data was furthermore discussed at the Discourse Workshop, Lund University, 28 October 2008 and at the postgraduate research forum at the National Forum for English Studies, Malmö University, 17 April 2009.

from the form in which it is dressed up. In other words, this approach to the current material purports to lay bare what can be seen as the argumentative skeletons of Parker's texts. Given the aim of this investigation, my analysis of Parker's argumentation is intended to explore ways in which argumentative traits of the wine reviews can be shown to have the potential to contribute to their persuasiveness. I will however refrain from making normative judgements about Parker's argumentation on the basis of the pragma-dialectical criteria for evaluation of argumentative discourse.<sup>38</sup>

### 3.2.3 ANALYSIS OF APPRAISAL

To complement the two perspectives presented in the preceding subsections, i.e. the analysis of representations and argumentation, I will employ a third analytical method which enables the exploration of how values are construed and shared linguistically, i.e. by means of which rhetorical devices readers are invited to enter into dialogue with the writer so as to provide the provisions for shared values to be established. In the present context, the establishment of shared values with respect to wine is crucial for persuasion to be effectuated, and the evocation of credibility in evaluation is therefore an important aspect of the persuasiveness in these texts. Furthermore, evaluation is seen as a fundamentally dialogistic phenomenon, i.e. the point of making a proposal about the value of something is to invite others to share that value.<sup>39</sup> The way in which the world is described always implies some kind of evaluation. Hunston (2000:195) argues that "the words chosen to describe the world in a text inevitably reflect the ideology of the writer". The same observation has been made about descriptions of wine: According to Lehrer (1975:903) "the evaluative dimension [of the wine tasting note] permeates every other dimension, even 'descriptive' ones". Consequently, I acknowledge the difficulty of maintaining a clear-cut distinction between evaluative and descriptive components of Parker's wine reviews and explore how more or less evaluatively oriented dimensions interact so as to induce persuasiveness. This approach concurs with Martin & White's (2005:107–108) position which is declared to be "reluctant to operate with a taxonomy which [...] abruptly separates 'fact' from 'opinion'".

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<sup>38</sup> See van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1992) for an account of the pragma-dialectical rules for a critical discussion as well as the traditional notion of fallacies, which are regarded by the pragma-dialectical model as violations of rules for a critical discussion (van Eemeren & Grootendorst (1992:208).

<sup>39</sup> Instead of employing expressions such as "shared information" or "mutual knowledge", Tindale (2004:22) adopts the term "mutual cognitive environment" based on Sperber & Wilson (1995). From the perspective of Cognitive Linguistics, Verhagen (2005:10) expresses a similar idea using the term "cognitive coordination": "[E]ngaging in cognitive coordination comes down to, for the speaker/writer, an attempt to *influence* someone else's thoughts, attitudes or even immediate behaviour. For the addressee it involves finding out what kind of influence it is that the speaker/writer is trying to exert, and deciding to go along with it or not." Since this study incorporates several different theoretical perspectives, the less theory-laden terms "shared/mutual/communal information/knowledge/values" have nevertheless been preferred.

According to Thompson & Hunston (2000:22), there are several different terminologies in the area of evaluation. This is due to the fact that evaluation can occur along several different parameters. Hunston (2000:176) distinguishes between two major types of evaluation: evaluation of propositions, i.e. interactive evaluation or evaluation along the certainty parameter, and evaluation of entities, i.e. autonomous evaluation or evaluation along the good-bad parameter. She arrives at the conclusion that “the ideological space of a discourse is constructed both by the way the world is labelled (evaluation on the autonomous plane) and by the way the argument is constructed (evaluation on the interactive plane)” (Hunston 2000:205). In academic texts or other texts that build knowledge claims, evaluation of propositions is a conspicuous feature. This type of evaluation is associated with the certainty parameter and typically realized grammatically by expressions of modality and reporting structures. Evaluation of entities, on the other hand, is typically realized by adjectives and nouns. According to Thompson & Hunston (2000:20), the first of these two types of evaluation has been much more extensively investigated than the second. The occurrences of evaluation in my material fall within both of Hunston’s types, which means that analytical tools are needed which enable the exploration of both autonomous and interactive evaluation.

Considering that the present study is problem-oriented rather than geared towards particular linguistic items, I have found it useful to employ the Appraisal model, a framework designed by Martin & White (2005).<sup>40</sup> Martin & White’s model has been found particularly appropriate since it provides tools for analysis of the rhetorical potential of autonomous as well as interactive evaluation.<sup>41</sup> Meaning is seen as construed in context and dependent on social relationship rather than as an “individual, psychological, and self-expressive function of language” (Martin & White 2005:94). The basis for the analytical tools provided by the Appraisal system is reportedly potential rhetorical effect rather than linguistic categories. This means that the model is compatible with the overall theoretical perspective of the present study, which promotes the communicative notion of persuasiveness over linguistic form. The Appraisal framework is described as “a particular approach to exploring, describing and explaining the way language is used to evaluate, to adopt stances, to construct textual personas and to manage interpersonal positionings and relationships” (White 2001).

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<sup>40</sup> Work on the Appraisal model began within the Australian branch of SFL among researchers in the field of educational linguistics who were involved in Australia’s genre-based literacy programs (White 2002:1). What initiated the development of this new model was the discovery that the analytical tools provided by SFL were not designed to deal with the semantic resources that speakers use for evaluation. Martin & White (2005:33–34) as well as Martin & Rose (2003:7) position Appraisal as an interpersonal system on the stratum of discourse semantics.

<sup>41</sup> A tentative analysis of one of Parker’s reviews assisted by the analytical tools of Appraisal theory was presented at the Summer School in Functional Linguistics, the University of Copenhagen, on 21 August 2008.

Grounded in SFL, Appraisal is presented as a set of options that are available to the writer, and between which the writer can make a choice. Furthermore, it is suggested that certain alternatives are more likely to be selected in certain contexts, and may therefore become routinized ways of construing evaluations in particular settings. Martin & White (2005:169) refer to this phenomenon as evaluative ‘key’. The Appraisal model includes three interactive components: Attitude, Engagement and Graduation. Attitude, which is regarded as focal, concerns feelings, such as emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things. Engagement comprises a set of resources by means of which speakers adopt a position with respect to propositions. Graduation is used for scaling the intensity of an attitude or the degree of speaker investment in a proposition (Martin & White 2005:35–39). Put simply, it is assumed that while expressing their (or other people’s) attitudes, speakers also simultaneously indicate the strength of these attitudes and position themselves with respect to the attitudes that are expressed. The following constructed example illustrates how the three Appraisal components interact:

I think wasps are horrible insects.

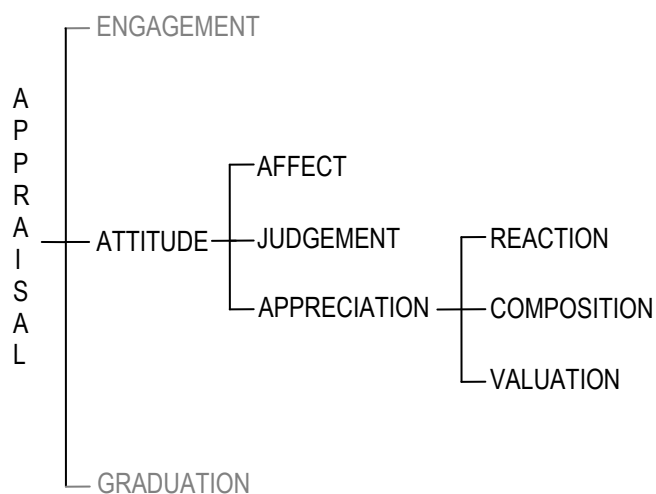
In this example, the text introduces the speaker as the source of the attitude that is being expressed (*I think*), i.e. evaluating wasps as *unpleasant*. Graduation in the form of amplification is infused here in the attitudinal element: wasps are not only *unpleasant*, they are *horrible*.

In the following, I will give an overview of how the three basic components of the Appraisal model are described in the major literature on Appraisal theory (Martin & White 2005, White 2001, White 2002, White 2003, Hood 2006, Hood & Martin 2007, MacKen-Horarik 2003, Martin & Rose 2003, Humphrey & Droga 2002, Bednarek 2008, Martin 2000b, Taverniers 2002). The proposed Appraisal system consists in an extensive range of categories organized in networks. In order to facilitate understanding, the discussed categories are continuously summarized by means of figures.

## ATTITUDE

According to the Appraisal model, the expression of attitude is viewed in terms of social relationship rather than self-expression. In other words, an attitudinal position advanced by a speaker is seen as an invitation to others to align with the addressor in this value position, hence entering into a community of shared values. The model suggests a division of Attitude into three regions: Affect, which concerns resources for expressing feelings, Judgement, which deals with the character and behaviour of conscious human participants, and Appreciation, which refers to evaluation of entities, i.e. products as well as processes and natural phenomena (Martin and White 2005:35–36). Figure 3:2 below gives a preliminary overview of the hierarchical system of Attitude, showing the catego-

ries that are of most immediate significance in the present study. The figure is subsequently followed by a clarifying account:



**Figure 3:2 The Appraisal system of Attitude**

Affect can be realized by a variety of lexico-grammatical structures, e.g. as quality (epithet: *a happy person*, attribute: *the person is happy*, or nominalised: *happiness*), as mental or behavioural process (*love, hate, smile*) or as adverbial of manner (*happily*). The model offers a number of subcategories of positive and negative Affect: Desire/disinclination, Un/happiness, In/security, Dis/satisfaction (Martin & White 2005:71). Bednarek (2008:172) also adds a category for Surprise. I am reluctant to take all these subcategories into consideration since pilot studies of Parker’s texts show that subclassification of Affect expressions does not seem fruitful.<sup>42</sup> Although these preliminary investigations showed no occurrences of Affect, I am not implying that it should be impossible to evaluate a product in terms of the taster’s affect. However, since the emotions involved concern a product, Affect categories like for instance In/Security and Un/Happiness are not likely to be instantiated. Instead, Affect, if occurring in this type of text, is liable to refer exclusively to the writer’s

<sup>42</sup> Several pilot studies have been undertaken, which explore the potential of using Appraisal for the analysis of this material. Except for the pilot analyses of several texts carried out by myself, one of the texts was posted as a query on the Appraisal discussion forum in order to obtain independent results. In addition, two master students in English linguistics at Växjö University, Genoveva del Rosario Corro Millán and Olga Abakumova, performed independent Attitude categorizations of the same seven texts as part of a semantics course for which they received course credits. None of these pilot investigations of Parker’s texts showed any occurrences of Affect.



Dis/Satisfaction with the product, which makes subcategorization of Affect superfluous in the present study.

The Judgement system consists of two main subcategories: Social sanction, which refers to the morality aspect (veracity and propriety) of people's behaviour and character, and Social esteem, which concerns their normality, capacity or tenacity. Since the pilot studies of Parker's texts showed no occurrences of Social sanction, subcategorization of occurrences into Social sanction and Social esteem seems less relevant in the present context. Still, the category of Judgement in itself is of importance here since expressions involving Judgement emphasize the man-made aspects of the resulting product, i.e. the wine. It is also of importance for the writer's textual persona that he represents himself as being in the position to make judgements about producers' capacity. Based on examples provided by Humphrey & Droga (2002:79) the attitudinal region of Judgement can be realized as qualities ascribed to conscious participants (e.g. *courageous*), by manner adverbials (*cleverly*) or by nouns (*tyranny*).

Since the texts in this material target an artefact, it is the category of Appreciation that is of most urgent importance, which was also consistently demonstrated by the pilot studies. The Appraisal model proposes a number of subcategories for different subtypes of Appreciation: Reaction concerns emotional appreciation of a thing's quality or the impact a thing has on the appraiser. The Appreciation category of Reaction is closely related to the category of Affect (Bednarek 2008:176,182 footnote). The usefulness of further subclassifications within the Appraisal category of Reaction will be discussed in the Appraisal analysis of Parker's wine reviews (see chapter 7). The following examples of instantiations of the Reaction category are given by Martin & White (2005:56): *beautiful, appealing, ugly, uninviting*. Composition relates to aesthetic evaluation of things as they are perceived by the senses (*harmonious/discordant* (Bednarek 2008:15)). Valuation refers to non-aesthetic evaluation of the social significance of the appreciated entity (e.g. *profound/shallow*). Martin & White (2005:57) specify Reaction as associated with emotion, Composition as having to do with perception and Valuation as related to cognition.

Furthermore, Martin & White suggest that inscribed realizations of Attitude as well as invoked occurrences should be taken into consideration when the Appraisal model is used for discourse analysis: "the selection of ideational meanings [may be] enough to invoke evaluation, even in the absence of attitudinal lexis that tells us directly how to feel" (Martin & White 2005:62).<sup>43</sup> Adendorff and de Klerk (2006:75) consider inscribed Attitude to be "heavily prescriptive" and "less open to negotiation" than invoked Attitude. Their posi-

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<sup>43</sup> A number of terms besides 'inscribed' and 'invoked' are used by Appraisal analysts to refer to the option of explicitness. 'Direct', 'explicit', 'overt' are thus used as synonyms of 'inscribed', and 'indirect', 'implicit', 'covert', 'token' are synonymous with 'invoked'. When this phenomenon is being referred to in the technical sense, I will be using the term 'inscribed' to designate explicit occurrences, and alternate between 'invoked' and 'token' to refer to implicit cases.

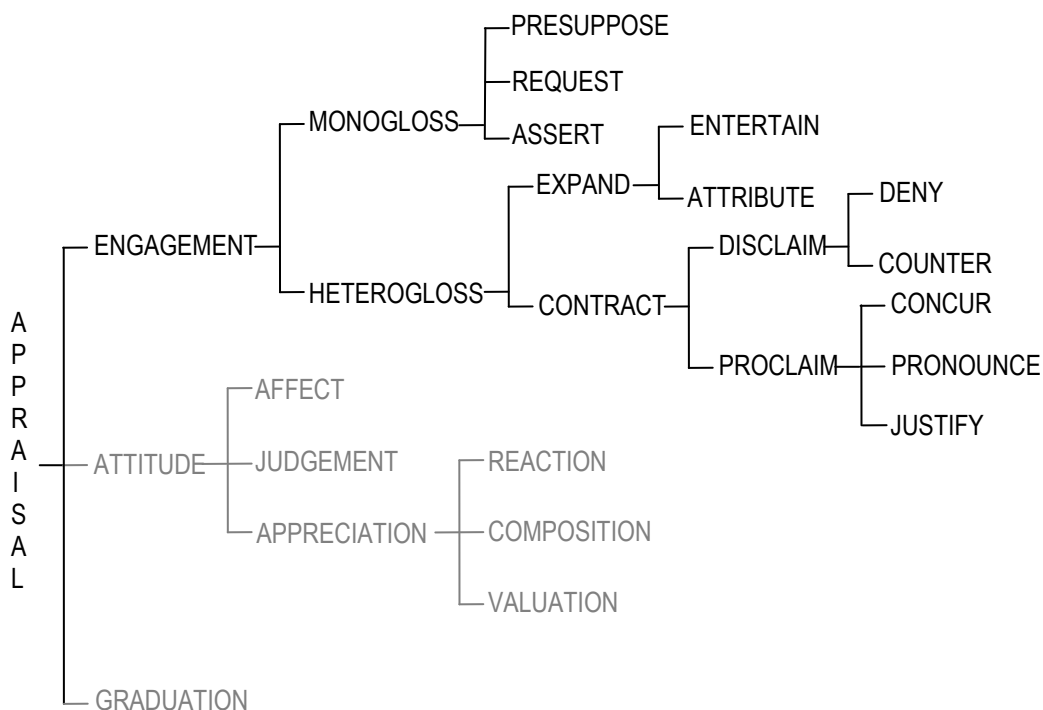
tion is that occurrences of inscribed Attitude therefore make it more difficult for the reader to resist the writer's invitation to share the value position being advanced. This correlates with van Eemeren & Houtlosser's (2009:6 based on Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969) observation that disagreement over facts is less face-threatening than disagreement over values. Consequently, one way to avoid potential controversy could therefore be to invoke rather than inscribe Attitude.

The system of Attitude as it has been presented in this subsection is employed in the current study as a point of departure for the characterization and interpretation of Parker's wine writing. In order to deal with the specific attitudinal meanings referenced in the wine reviews, section 7.1 below shows how the original Appraisal system of Attitude can be expanded so as to function as a useful methodological tool to assist the present enquiry.

## ENGAGEMENT

The Appraisal system of Engagement comprises linguistic resources used by addressors to indicate their stance towards the value position that is being advanced. It is influenced by Bakhtin's (1981) notion of dialogism, according to which "all verbal communication, whether written or spoken, is 'dialogic' in that to speak or write is always to reveal the influence of, refer to, or to take up in some way, what has been said/written before, and simultaneously to anticipate the responses of actual, potential or imagined readers/listeners" (Martin & White 2005:92, White 2003:261). The linguistic resources that are subsumed under the heading of Engagement are devices that allow writers to signal whether they anticipate the value position they put forward to be in some way controversial or likely to be questioned by the audience, in which case Martin & White (2005:93) speak of "heteroglossic backdrop of other voices". The lack of such markers of heteroglossia does not make a text less intersubjectively charged. This type of presentation signals that the writer has chosen not to take other, potentially conflicting, viewpoints into consideration, so that the value position put forward in a monoglossic proposition is presented as one which assumes the audience's agreement.

In view of the fact that it is potential rhetorical effect rather than grammatical form that constitutes the foundation for the Appraisal model, the Engagement system incorporates a wide range of diverse locutions organized into different categories based on communicative function, e.g. wordings that have traditionally been referred to in the linguistics literature by means of labels such as modality, polarity, evidentiality and attribution (Martin & White 2005:94). This section resumes the most central elements of Engagement. Figure 3.3 provides a schematic overview so as to introduce the account of the Engagement system:



**Figure 3:3 The Appraisal system of Engagement**

A major dividing line is drawn between monoglossic and heteroglossic utterances. Monoglossic propositions are those in which other viewpoints are not recognized, i.e. bare or categorical assertions. Martin & White (2005:99) stress that their view of the bare assertion differs from the ideas presented in truth-functional theories of language, where these types of assertions, which are seen as factive, objective statements, are contrasted with modalized utterances, which signal a restriction in the speaker's degree of commitment to the truth value of the proposition that is being advanced, an idea which will be explored in the analysis of the wine reviews.

A further distinction is made between monoglossic options where the utterance is textually arranged so that the value that is being advanced is presented as up for debate, i.e. as new and hence central information occurring as part of the Rheme of the message. This type of monoglossic assertions contrasts with those where the value position is textually back-grounded and presented as tak-

en for granted, i.e. as part of the Theme of the message.<sup>44</sup> According to Thompson & Hunston (2000:8-9), evaluation is particularly manipulative when it occurs as given, not new, information: "...the less obtrusively the evaluation is placed in the clause, the more likely it is to successfully manipulate the reader". The monoglossic option of Presupposition is explored from the perspective of Appraisal theory in Simon-Vandenberg et al. (2007). Fairclough (2001:127–128), who associates presupposition with authorial power, argues that it is difficult for people to identify presuppositions and hence to reject them if they wish to. Fairclough's view of this phenomenon thus correlates with Martin & White's (2005:101) account, where it is proposed that "taken-for-granted-ness [...] has the strongly ideological effect of construing for the text a putative addressee who shares this value position with the speaker/writer...".

Heteroglossic resources are subdivided into a number of categories with a major dividing line between those strategies that entail dialogic expansion and those which involve dialogic contraction (Martin & White 2005:102). Dialogic expansion incorporates resources by means of which the dialogistic space is opened up for alternative viewpoints and voices, while dialogic contraction subsumes options that serve the communicative purpose of challenging or restricting the scope of, and so closing down, the dialogistic space for alternative positions and voices.

The Engagement category of dialogistic expansion involves two subcategories: Entertain refers to options which signal that the position advanced is to be seen as just one voice among others on a particular issue. The resources that are subsumed under this heading include modal auxiliaries (*may, might, could, must*), modal adjuncts (*perhaps, probably, definitely*), mental verbs/attributive projections (*I think, I suspect that, I'm convinced that*), appearance-based declarations (*it appears, it seems*) and expository questions (Martin & White 2005:105). In addition, the Entertain category includes expressions of permission and obligation, so called 'directives'.<sup>45</sup> These are understood to contrast with the pure imperative, which is considered monoglossic. Martin & White (2005:111) justify these categorizations on the grounds that the modal "explicitly grounds the demand in the subjectivity of the speaker" and "the speaker's role as a participant in a dialogic exchange is [thereby] acknowledged". In accordance with Martin & White's proposal, the monoglossic option of the pure imperative is included in figure 3.3 as the subcategory of Request.

When occurring in the context of attitudinal values, resources from the Entertain subcategory indicate that the writer takes into consideration the possible existence of alternative viewpoints in addition to the one that the writer is ad-

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<sup>44</sup> The terms Theme and Rheme are used within SFL to designate the textual components of a message (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004:65).

<sup>45</sup> Lassen (2003) sees directives as an umbrella term subsuming offers, which supposedly benefit the addressee, and commands, which are beneficial to the speaker rather than the writer.

vancing.<sup>46</sup> This type of expressions can therefore be seen as signalling solidarity with, or at least acknowledgement of, those that hold these alternative viewpoints.

The other Entertain subcategory, Attribution, refers to linguistic resources by means of which the proposition is dissociated from the authorial voice and attributed to some other external source, for instance reporting structures (*x claims, believes, suggests*), nominalizations of such structures (*assertion that, belief that*) or adverbial adjuncts (*according to*). Impersonalized occurrences (*reportedly, it is believed that*) are also included in this category.<sup>47</sup> Resources from the subcategory of Attribution allow writers to present themselves as having no stake in the proposition, i.e. as simply conveying information. The same information can of course be conveyed without the acknowledgement that the information comes from an external source, in which case the authorial voice internalizes, and hence presents itself as responsible for, the proposition. This communicative strategy, which is common in argumentative texts, is regarded as monoglossic assertion (Martin & White 2005:117). As explained in section 3.2.1 and 3.2.2, the notions of mode of knowing and source of evidence are also of crucial significance in the analyses of persuasiveness in representation and argumentation. The perspective of Appraisal is however different, since the target of analysis is the potential rhetorical effect of linguistic realizations in the texts' surface form.

In contrast to communicative strategies of dialogistic expansion, which serve the purpose of opening up the dialogistic space for alternative viewpoints, dialogistic contraction, while also being heteroglossic insofar as bringing alternatives into the colloquy, operates to exclude, or at least restrict the scope of, these alternatives from the current communication. The resources of dialogic contraction are subdivided into two broad categories of which several subcategories have been proposed. The category of Disclaim subsumes formulations that bring into being alternative meanings which, although being recognized, are "directly rejected, replaced or held to be unsustainable" (Martin & White 2005:118). First, Deny refers to expressions involving negation. As noted by Martin & White, it has been widely acknowledged in the linguistics literature that while the positive does not automatically invoke the negative, a negation normally entails the corresponding positive.<sup>48</sup> Second, the Disclaim subcategory of Counter subsumes strategies by means of which writers indicate that the

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<sup>46</sup> Martin & White (2005) acknowledge that in some contexts, especially those where experiential meaning rather than evaluative meaning is foregrounded, resources from the Entertain category may well function to express lack of commitment by speakers/writers who do not consider themselves to have the necessary knowledge to make a categorical claim.

<sup>47</sup> The Appraisal system further subcategorizes Attribution, but since attribution is not a prominent feature of the present material, further subcategorizations are not taken into consideration in the present Appraisal analysis.

<sup>48</sup> See e.g. Tottie (1982) or Fairclough (1992) as well as more recent studies such as Giora (2006) or Paradis & Willners (2006).

natural expectation arising from the proposition is not fulfilled. Martin & White (2005:120–121) give the following examples of instantiations of Counter: *although, however, but, yet, surprisingly, even, only, just* and *still*. When using the communicative strategy of countering the writer relies on the reader's background knowledge to complete the argumentation by supplying the implicit premise that has been taken for granted. The effect of this rhetorical strategy on the reader-writer relationship is to enhance solidarity, provided that the reader agrees with the premise that the writer takes for granted. An addressee who does not embrace the viewpoint that is being taken for granted will however be alienated by such a communicative strategy (Martin & White 2005:121). In excluding these alternative options it can therefore be seen to close down the dialogistic space.

The other main subgroup of dialogistic contraction, Proclaim, includes several subcategories. Concur refers to expressions which overtly signal that the writer has the same knowledge or point of view as the addressee. Locutions used in this function are for instance *of course, naturally, not surprisingly, certainly* or leading questions to which the addressee is positioned to provide a definite reply that is presented as self-evident in the context. The rhetorical effect of Concur expressions is to construe the advanced position as the one that is generally agreed to hold, and alternative voices are thereby excluded from the argumentation. Formulations from this group are nevertheless heteroglossic in that they invoke other voices that are in agreement with the authorial voice. The next subgroup under Proclaim is Pronounce. When using resources from the Pronounce subcategory, the presence of the authorial voice is emphasized so as to suppress any resistance that might exist. Martin & White (2005:127) give the following examples from this subcategory: *I contend, the facts of the matter are, indeed* etc. Formulations from the Pronounce category can only be resisted at an increased interpersonal cost, and they are therefore seen to close down the dialogistic space for other alternative viewpoints.<sup>49</sup> Concur and Pronounce options are closely related, but the Appraisal model nevertheless includes two distinct categories to deal with these types of interpersonal meanings. According to Martin & White (2005:125–130) both types frequently co-occur with formulations from the Disclaim subgroup of Counter. Another potential subcategory under Proclaim, which is not added to the Engagement system in Martin & White (2005), but which has nevertheless been discussed by Appraisal theorists, is Justify (White, personal communication).<sup>50</sup> Resources from this subcategory, which is instantiated by expressions like *because, since, therefore*, function to indicate that the proposition that is being advanced may

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<sup>49</sup> Another subcategory of Proclaim, Endorse, which refers to attributed propositions, was not taken into consideration in the present study.

<sup>50</sup> My discussion with Dr White took place at Växjö University 28–29 April 2009 during seminar and workshop arrangements focusing on the Appraisal model.

be seen as contentious by a putative addressee, and therefore in need of justification.<sup>51</sup>

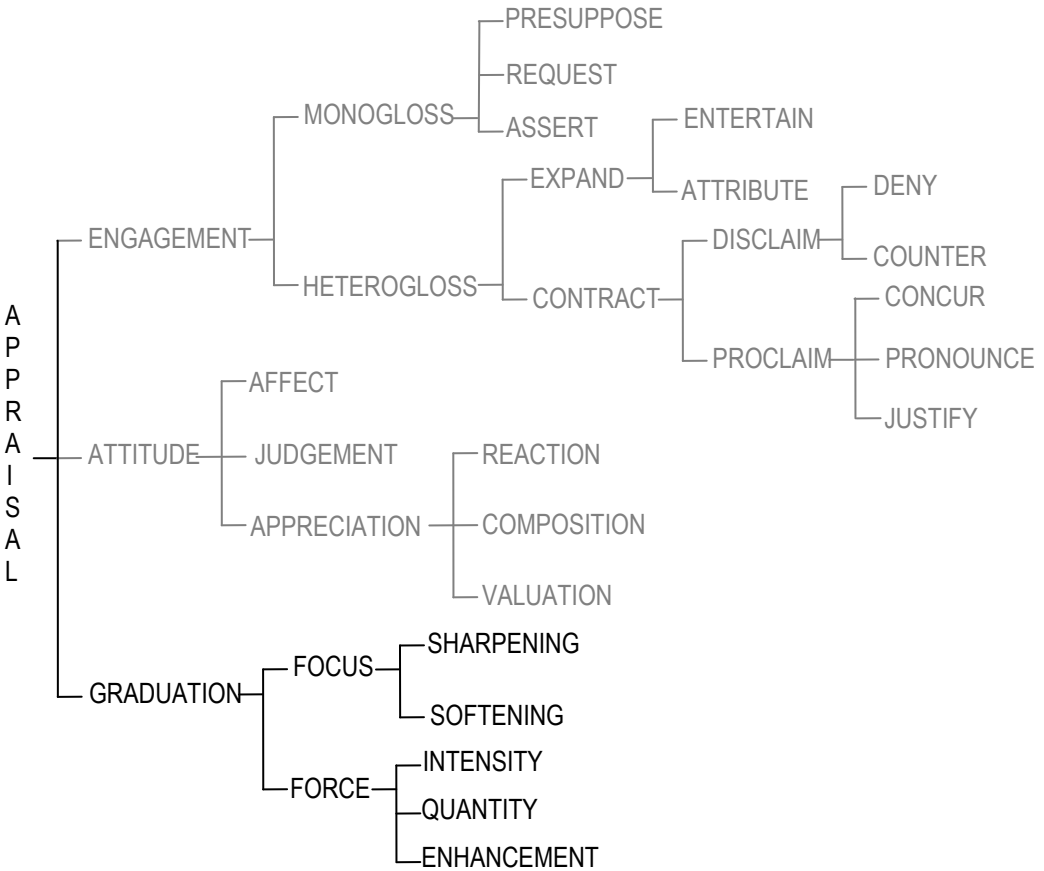
As this outline has shown, the system of Engagement is vast and complex. This is partly due to the fact that the type of interactive evaluation that the Engagement system is designed to deal with has been much more extensively investigated by linguists than the autonomous type, which is the target of the system of Attitude (Thompson & Hunston 2000:20). Incorporation of such previous studies in the Appraisal component of Engagement has subsequently resulted in this intricate system of different sublevels. It has nevertheless been felt important to include this survey, since the resources subsumed under the system of Engagement are rhetorical devices that play an important persuasive role, because they have the potential to make a natural and unaffected impression so that it is not apparently noticeable that rhetorical devices have been applied. The analytical tools provided under Engagement are useful for the current interpretation of persuasiveness in Parker's writing, since they enable the exposure of features that would otherwise remain unnoticed.

## GRADUATION

According to Martin & White (2005:135), all attitudinal expressions have the potential to be graded, i.e. express stronger or weaker degrees of negativity or positivity: gradability is a defining property of attitudinal meanings. Locutions of graduation have the rhetorical function of enabling "speakers/writers to present themselves as more strongly aligned or less strongly aligned with the value position being advanced by the texts" (Martin & White 2005:94). The figure below captures the Appraisal system of Graduation in a schematic format:

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<sup>51</sup> Having adopted a maximally argumentative perspective (see e.g. Eemeren et al. 2002:116), it can and will be argued that the entire texts in my material consist of justifications of the standpoints that are being advanced. From the point of view of Appraisal analysis, the issue is however to be able to reveal whether the formulations that are selected include explicit markers which invite the audience to interpret the evaluations that are being put forward as potentially controversial. I will return to this ambiguous and possibly confusing application of the term 'justify' in the appraisal analysis.



**Figure 3:4 The Appraisal system of Graduation**

The Appraisal model suggests two ways of graduating Attitude, or “two axes of scalability”: Focus and Force (Martin & White 2005: 137). Focus refers to graduation with respect to category membership or prototypicality. This type of graduation often applies to entities which are normally not scalable, but where graduation serves the purpose of redefining categories in accordance with clines of prototypicality. By means of Focus “phenomena are scaled by reference to the degree to which they match some supposed core or exemplary instance of a semantic category” (Martin & White 2005:137). Focus can either be up-scaled or down-scaled, i.e. sharpened or softened, thereby functioning to add attitudinal flavour to terms which do not normally have a strong attitudinal meaning (*a true friend/ a friend sort of*). According to Martin & White (2005:139) Focus/sharpening normally flags a positive attitudinal assessment, while instances construing a phenomenon as only marginally part of a category,



i.e. Focus/softening, are likely to express negativity. However, the type of attitude that is evoked by means of Focus must always be interpreted in relation to the surrounding co-text.

Where graduation according to prototypicality is used to sharpen an expression that is in itself strongly attitudinal (e.g. *a genuine hero*), the effect is “to indicate maximal investment by the authorial voice in the value position (either negative or positive) being advanced and hence to strongly align the reader in the value position being advanced” (Martin & White 2005:139). Correspondingly, it is suggested that softening of an attitudinal expression offers “a conciliatory gesture directed towards maintaining solidarity with those who hold contrary views” (Martin & White 2005:139) or occurs when the “assessment is being construed as potentially problematic for writer-reader solidarity”, (e.g. *kind of awkward*) (Martin & White 2005:140).<sup>52</sup>

Furthermore, Focus can also refer to the sharpening or softening of categorical boundaries around processes, indicating degree of completion or realisation, for instance concerning the degree of fulfilment in the prediction of a future event (it *may* happen/it *should* happen/it *will* happen). According to Hood (2006:40) such uses of Graduation are indications of “a subjective positioning on behalf of the writer”.

The second sub-category of the Graduation system is Force, which refers to assessments of intensity and amount. Force includes three subtypes: Intensification, which applies to qualities, Enhancement, which refers to processes, and Quantification, which concerns graduation with respect to amount and applies to entities. The system of Force is then further subcategorized based on lexicogrammatical criteria. Isolating intensification is realized via isolated items of which the sole or at least primary function is to determine the level of intensity, i.e. grammatical intensifiers. Examples from this category are premodifiers of adjectives or adverbs (*rather, very, extremely*) or comparatives/superlatives (*more, most, -er, -est*). This subcategory of Force/Intensification also includes so called ‘maximizers’, which instantiate the upper-most end of the scale on which they operate (e.g. *completely, always, constant*).

In addition, isolating intensification can also consist in lexicalized intensification carried out by means of figurative expressions (*ice cold*) or expressions with an attitudinal overtone (e.g. *dreadfully cold*), which in many cases have become delexicalized (Martin & White 2005:143).

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<sup>52</sup> This example, which has been adapted from similar ones (*kind of sexy, kind of marvellous*) given by Martin & White (2005:140), illustrates an aspect of the present Graduation system that I find problematic: It seems counterintuitive to talk about softening of category boundaries in relation to properties like the ones in these examples. Moreover, it is not easy to keep up the distinction between sharpened Focus and upscaled Force, which the application of these tools to the present material will subsequently show. The inter-rater analysis of this material, which is presented in Hommerberg & Don (forthcoming), confirms that these divisions are debatable, at least in the analysis of the present material.

Infused intensification, on the other hand, is realized as one meaning aspect of a single item (e.g. *competent, skilful, brilliant*). Infused intensification is said to be common with processes, as these are often not scalable by means of isolating items.

Moreover, intensification of qualities and processes can also be realized via repetition, either of the same item (it's *hot hot hot*, they *laughed and laughed and laughed*) or of lists of items which are closely related semantically (Martin & White 2005:144).

As already mentioned, quantification concerns graduation of entities (abstract as well as concrete), i.e. scaling with respect to amount and extent. According to Martin & White (2005:150) quantification of abstract entities may be very close in meaning to intensification of qualities (cf. *amazing richness* and *amazingly rich*). In these cases it is proposed that precedence should be given to the lexicogrammar so that instantiations of this phenomenon are regarded as quantification. The Appraisal definition of the Force subcategory of Quantification is that the category concerns "imprecise reckonings of number [...], imprecise reckonings of mass or presence [...] and imprecise reckonings of extent in time and space [...]" (Martin & White 2005 150-151). These phenomena are typically realized by means of isolated terms, i.e. *many, lots of, long*, but can also be realized via infusion, i.e. as part of a lexeme which also has other semantic content, e.g. *crowd*.

It is suggested that Force interacts with Attitude to increase or decrease the volume of attitudinal expressions: "Upscaling of attitude frequently acts to construe the speaker/writer as maximally committed to the value position being advanced and hence as strongly aligning the reader into that value position" whereas downscaling construes the speaker as having only partial or attenuated commitment (Martin & White 2005:152-153). Just like Focus, Force is also taken to play a role in providing expressions that are not strongly attitudinal with evaluative flavour.

#### APPRAISAL ANALYSIS IN THE CURRENT STUDY

This completes the presentation of the analytical tools provided by the Appraisal model. According to White (2001), Appraisal theory should be seen as an on-going research project with many problems still to be solved. The categories are therefore to be regarded as "hypotheses about the relevant meanings, being offered as a point of comparison for those with alternative classifications, as a resource for those who need something to manage the analysis of evaluation in discourse, and as a challenge to those concerned with developing appropriate reasoning" (White 2002:4). In other words, the framework can be thought of as providing a gross generalization or a basic draft of categories.

The model has so far been applied to a variety of different text types from different contexts, e.g. news media texts (White 1998, Bednarek 2008), academic writing (Hood 2006, Hood & Martin 2007), discussions of AIDS (Adendorff & de Klerk 2006), tourist websites (Kaltenbacher 2006) and narrative

student texts (MacKen-Horarik 2003, Folkeryd 2006) to mention a few areas. Both qualitative analyses of entire texts (see for example Don 2007, Hood 2008, Martin 2000b) and quantitative corpus investigations (Bednarek 2008, Adendorff & de Klerk 2006, Kaltenbacher 2006) have been undertaken. Although some explorations have concerned direct person-to-person communication (Eggins & Slade 1997), the types of texts for which the framework is primarily designed are mass communicative texts in which individual authors address audiences with which they have no personal acquaintance.

As indicated above, the Appraisal model relies on discourse semantic features of texts, and defining the boundary between different categories on the basis of objectively observable lexico-grammatical criteria is therefore not possible: The co-text, the context of situation and the culture in which the communicative activity takes place must be taken into consideration (Don 2007:2, Martin & Rose 2003:81–82). One of the problem areas of Appraisal analysis is that the model allows for inscribed as well as invoked Attitude, partly relying on lexico-grammatical criteria to determine category membership although the foundation for categorization is supposedly the more abstract stratum of discourse semantics. To deal with difficulties of categorization, it is suggested either to regard ambiguous occurrences as borderline cases (Martin & Rose 2003:35) or to see one category of Attitude as embedded within the other and thus to call for double coding in annotations drawing on the Appraisal model (Martin & White 2005:67–68). The difficulty of applying the system of Attitude to authentic data is brought up by ben-Aaron (2005a, 2005b). Another problematic issue in appraisal analysis is to define the linguistic unit to which the discourse semantic categories should be applied, since inscriptions of attitudinal meanings are simultaneously understood to “colour more of a text than their local grammatical environment circumscribes” (Martin & White 2005:63), i.e. “it is important to take co-text into account, rather than analysing simply item by item” (Martin & Rose 2003:36).

The preliminary pilot studies that were undertaken in order to test the usefulness of the model for the present investigation showed difficulties to decide, without any previous acquaintance with the specific register conventions or the situational and socio-cultural practice under study, whether the expressions used should be coded as occurrences of Attitude or not and which of the model’s proposed discourse semantic categories were being instantiated by the linguistic items occurring in the surface form of the texts. In contrast to quantitatively oriented studies of Attitude (see e.g. Adendorff 2006, Kaltenbacher 2006), where the results build entirely on clear-cut categories, I will not only be relying on the analytical tools provided by the Appraisal system as an objective screen that can be used to filter the texts. Instead, I acknowledge the fact that the proposed categories can be applied differently by different analysts depending on their understanding of the material at hand. Inspired by the original system of Attitude as it has been presented in section 3.2.3, the current study proposes a modified network of categories developed specifically in order to deal

with the particular attitudinal meanings referenced in the present material. This modified system of Attitude is employed as a scheme for annotation of a relatively large number of texts in order to provide a tentative attitudinal profile of Parker's wine writing. To facilitate this objective, the UAM Corpus Tool is used as a technical aid to assist the compilation of annotations.<sup>53</sup> Due to the tentativeness of the added Attitude categories, the coding of the larger material should not primarily be regarded as a definitive result in terms of number of instantiations of the different categories, but as an analytical method which enables a rudimentary overview of a large material. The coding of Attitude in the large material is complemented by a presentation of close interpretive analyses of a selection of entire texts, which exploits all the components of the Appraisal system, i.e. Attitude, Engagement as well as Graduation. The findings of the rudimentary analysis of the larger material thereby function as a backdrop for the discussion of the material selected for the presentation of close interpretive analysis.

While profiting from the insights gained so far by linguists working within the Appraisal framework, it is my hope that the present study will also contribute to the on-going research project through the critical assessment that goes with testing and adjusting the model in order to accommodate a hitherto unexplored field of discourse.

### 3.2.4 COMBINATION OF METHODS

The methods of analysis of representations, argumentation and appraisal, which were introduced in sections 3.2.1–3.2.3, are combined in such a manner that they build on one another in order to arrive at an increasingly profound understanding of the topic under study. The methodological tools that will be used to carry out this investigation have been selected in order to admit exploratory and rudimentary investigation of a relatively large number of texts as well as detailed interpretive analysis of a limited number of entire wine reviews.

The method for analyzing representations is designed to provide an introductory overview of the material, relating the findings to available contextual information as well as general world knowledge. The goal is to be able to arrive at an outline of general aspects that are characteristic of representations in the material as a whole. The patterns that are observed by means of this analytical technique will subsequently function as backdrop for the analyses of argumentation and appraisal, which take the division into thematic units and the characterization of these in terms of temporality and evidentiality as point of departure.

The argumentation analysis, which follows the investigation of representations, is linked to the preceding analytical perspective in such a way that the

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<sup>53</sup> The UAM Corpus Tool for text annotation is available for free download at <http://www.wagsoft.com/CorpusTool/>. Date of access 2 July 2011.

knowledge that is gained will function to support the reconstruction of a schematic argumentation structure that is adaptable to the entire corpus of texts. The schematic argumentation structure is subsequently employed to perform detailed interpretive analysis, where familiarity with the discourse type, world knowledge as well as available contextual information is relied on in order to reconstruct the potential arguments as well as the structure of the argumentation. The analysis of representations provides the necessary requisites for a plausible argumentation analysis to be performed, both as regards the schematic argumentative organization of Parker's wine reviews and the presentation of detailed interpretive argumentation analysis of a limited selection of wine reviews.

In order to carry out a comprehensive Appraisal analysis of the current material, the results of both the preceding analyses are taken into consideration so as to justify categorizations and interpretations. The division into thematic units undertaken in the analysis of representations is thereby understood as fundamental for the development and application of the range of subcategories that the current study adds to the original Attitude subsystem of Appreciation (see section 7.1). In addition, the notion of *topoi*, which is drawn on to assist the interpretive argumentation analysis, functions to enable a range of potentially attitudinal values to be revealed, which would perhaps otherwise remain unnoticed because they are taken for granted. The notion of *topoi* thus functions to justify a number of Appreciation subcategories.

Furthermore, the presentation of detailed, interpretive Appraisal analysis of a limited selection of wine reviews is closely linked to the preceding presentation of interpretive argumentation analysis: Whereas the argumentation perspective is designed to lay bare the potential content skeletons of a number of selected texts, the perspective of appraisal involves dressing the same texts up again in their linguistic outfits. It is important to emphasize that although the interpretive appraisal analysis addresses the same material, the perspective is different, since it is the potential rhetorical effects of the realization of the message that is in focus rather than the message itself, which is the target of the interpretive argumentation analysis.

### **3.3 SUMMARY AND POINTS OF DEPARTURE**

This chapter has presented the theoretical and methodological avenue that the present study adopts with respect to the topic of investigation. Section 3.1 explained that the investigation relies on Fairclough's (1992, 1995) model of a communicative event to provide a theoretical umbrella for the incorporation of the socio-cultural and discursive practice as well as for the integration of the combination of analytical methods which function to assist the explorations of the material. Section 3.2 discussed the complexity of performing contextually situated discourse analysis, which involves a constant movement between the dimensions of the model in order to arrive at a satisfactory interpretation of the

data, from the occurrence of linguistic expressions in the text to the discursive practice to the socio-cultural practice and back to the text. In order to assist the analyses that will be performed, three methodological perspectives are espoused. Sections 3.2.1–3.2.3 introduced the specific analytical methods that are employed for this investigation. Section 3.2.4 gave a preliminary idea of how the three methods are selected to complement each other so as to make it possible to arrive at increasing insight into the topic of investigation. The theoretical paradigms underlying the three methodological perspectives are understood to be theoretically compatible on the basis of the idea that they encourage the study of authentic text rather than constructed sentences and do not take meaning to reside in particular linguistic expression, but to be construed in the communication between author and addressee on the basis of co-text as well as context. In addition to exploring Parker's rhetorical endeavour, the combination of the three analytical methods is intended as a contribution to the quest for appropriate methodologies for doing contextually situated discourse analysis. The methodologically oriented ambition of this study will be summarized and evaluated in section 8.2.

In the next chapter, I set out to present the relatively large material that has been selected for the exploratory analysis of representations and the rudimentary analyses of argumentation and appraisal. In addition, I introduce the limited selection of reviews that will figure throughout the presentation of detailed interpretive analyses which are assisted by the tools provided by argumentation theory and Appraisal theory.

## 4 MATERIAL

In this section, I describe the data set that has been compiled for the present investigation along with the principles that have served as guidelines for the selection of data. As stated in chapter 3, it is of vital importance in this type of study to base the investigation on examination of authentic data, which is not considered in isolation but as part of a socially situated context. In the description of analytical methods given in sections 3.2.1–3.2.3, I indicated that the choice of methodology is intended for the incorporation of a relatively large material for exploratory and rudimentary analyses alongside a narrow selection of a limited set of texts for the presentation of close interpretive analyses. Section 4.1 describes the material selected for the exploratory analyses of representations as well as the rudimentary investigations of argumentation and appraisal, along with the principles governing the selection procedure.<sup>54</sup> Section 4.2 introduces the reviews that have been selected for the presentation of close interpretive analyses of argumentation and appraisal. In order to provide general knowledge about the topic of enquiry as well as more specific facts and details about the selected texts, the presentation of these reviews also includes information about the wine estates that are responsible for the production of the reviewed wines.

### 4.1 MATERIAL FOR EXPLORATORY AND RUDIMENTARY ANALYSES

Considering that it is in the French wine regions of Bordeaux and Rhône that Parker's wine writing is claimed to have the most extensive influence (see e.g. McCoy 2005, Langewiesche 2000, Agostini & Guichard 2007), I have chosen to focus on reviews that target wines from these regions. Bordeaux is also es-

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<sup>54</sup> The analysis of representations provided in chapter 5 also involves a characterization of the presentational resources that welcome the reader at *The Wine Advocate's* website (*The Wine Advocate official website. The independent consumer's guide to fine wine*). These resources are not included in the overview of the data given in this chapter. The lay-out of the website is accessible without subscription to *The Wine Advocate*.

pecially interesting with respect to the socio-economical phenomenon of luxury consumption which is understood to constitute the arena that hosts this communicative activity, since it has a long-standing reputation of being the world's most prestigious and expensive wine region.

According to Johnstone (2000:24) an important aspect of qualitative research is to try to minimize the ways in which expectations affect observations. In a similar vein, Wodak & Meyer (2009:11) maintain that it is important to avoid what they call 'cherry-picking', i.e. selecting for analysis occurrences that confirm any prior assumptions that the analyst might have. The desire to select the most interesting or relevant material for observation may thus potentially conflict with the scientific recommendation not to let preconceptions influence the collection of data.

Although I have decided to 'cherry-pick' the regions of Bordeaux and Rhône, the individual reviews have nevertheless been randomly selected. In order to compile a data set that is suitable with regard to the aim of this investigation as well as consistent with scientific recommendations, I collected 50 texts from the issue of 23 February 2006 dealing with Rhône wines and 150 texts from *The Wine Advocate* issue of 24 April 2006 featuring Bordeaux wines, the idea being to focus on the most recent material available when this investigation was initiated.

The texts selected for this investigation were originally extracted from a database of 85,000 tasting notes from 1989 through 2006 to which Parker has been so generous as to grant my supervisor, Professor Carita Paradis, and myself access. The tasting notes were retrieved systematically in the order that they appeared in the database, starting from the last tasting note of the issue of April 24 2006, which was the most recent tasting note available at the time when I collected the material for this study. In addition to Parker, three other writers appear as authors in the 2006 issues of *The Wine Advocate*: Pierre Rovani, Daniel Thomases and David Schildknecht. The tasting notes written by these writers, which provide assessments of wines from other districts, were not included in the material. Furthermore, some of Parker's texts were discarded, either due to the fact that the same text occurred more than once or that the entry only included a numerical evaluation of the wine accompanied by the comment No tasting note was given. The discarded entries amount to approximately 10%. It has subsequently been verified that all the texts that are included in my corpus can be accessed by subscribers to the online version of *The Wine Advocate*.<sup>55</sup>

This 200 text database is believed to make up a suitable sample of Parker's wine writing, large enough to enable generalizations, yet manageable for relatively detailed scrutiny. It is anticipated that this data set will enable the fulfil-

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<sup>55</sup> The 200 tasting notes were accessed and printed from *The Wine Advocate* in December 2007.



ment of the completeness criterion (see section 3.2). Table 4:1 displays the composition of the material resulting from this selection process:

**Table 4:1 Composition of corpus**

<b>Wine Advocate issue</b>	<b>Red</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Words per text</b>
February 23 2006, Rhône wines	44	6	50	45
April 24 2006, Bordeaux wines	149	1	150	69
Total	193	7	200	62

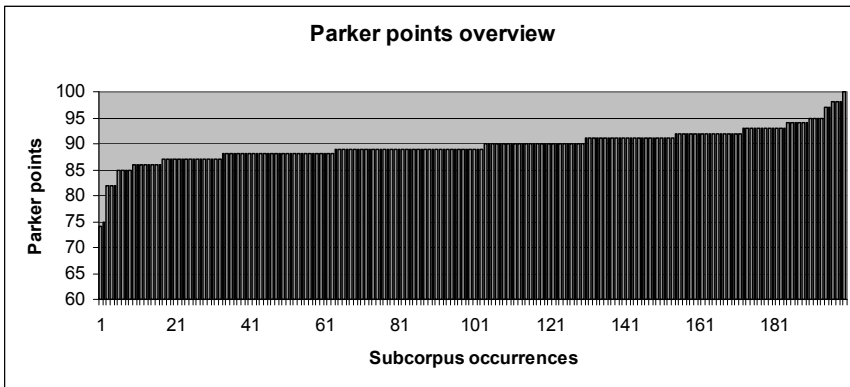
Table 4:1 makes it clear that an overwhelming majority (193/200) of the texts included are evaluations of red wines. This can be seen as a reflection of the wine production in the regions that these reviews target: Both Bordeaux and Rhône are more famous for their red than for their white wines. It can also be understood to be a reflection of Parker’s interest area: According to McCoy (2005:116), Parker considers white wines (as well as Pinot noir-based red wines, for instance the red wines from Burgundy) simpler to taste because there is “less to look for” compared to “bigger, more tannic reds”, which require more attentiveness in order for the fruit to be detected.

The corpus of 200 tasting notes includes a total of 12,511 words, which means an average word length of 62 words per text.<sup>56</sup> However, the tasting notes vary in length between 13 and 206 words. In addition, as shown in table 4:1, the average length of the Bordeaux texts is 69 words, while the Rhône texts contain only 45 words on average.

Parker’s tasting notes are complemented by a numerical score, which uses the same scale as the American grading system, i.e. grades are provided on a scale from 50 to 100, where 100 represents a perfect wine (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker’s rating system). Parker’s numerical scores have had enormous impact among consumers and will be further discussed throughout the analysis chapters. For this preliminary description of the data, it is worth observing that the wines evaluated in the corpus of 200 Bordeaux and Rhône reviews have received very favourable numerical ratings. In fact, only occasional wines are rated below 85.<sup>57</sup> Figure 4:1 is intended to give a visual overview of the numerical ratings, ranging from lowest to highest:

<sup>56</sup> Headings and numerical scores were excluded from the word count.

<sup>57</sup> Where an imprecise numerical score is given, for instance 91–93 Parker points, the score has been listed as 92 for the purpose of the presentation in figure 4:1. The communicative implications of the imprecise numerical scores will be further investigated in chapters 5 and 7.



**Figure 4:1** Distribution of Parker points in the corpus of 200 Bordeaux and Rhône reviews

The numerical evaluation was not considered in the compilation of the corpus, which means that the distribution of Parker points is incidental. A spot check of one thousand tasting notes from 2006 nevertheless suggests that this distribution pattern is a more general trend in Parker’s wine assessments: only 45 of 1000 wines were rated below 85, and none were rated below 70. This may be due to the fact that only 30% of the wines that Parker tastes actually “make it into *The Wine Advocate*” (Parker quoted in McCoy 2005:221). The 70% that do not “make it” can be expected to include wines which have received rankings towards the lower end of the scale. I am therefore inclined to regard the numerical scores given to the wines in the corpus material as representative of Parker’s wine reviews: The vast majority deal with positive assessments.

The exploratory and rudimentary analyses of this data set of 200 reviews are intended to function as backdrop for the presentation of detailed interpretation of entire texts. The reviews selected for close scrutiny are introduced in section 4.2.

## 4.2 MATERIAL FOR INTERPRETIVE ANALYSIS

In this section, I will present, describe and discuss the texts that have been selected for the presentation of interpretive analyses of argumentation and appraisal. A problematic methodological aspect associated with doing detailed qualitative analysis of a few selected texts is how to justify the choice of material. This issue is brought up by Jaworsky & Coupland (2006:30) who state that “[i]t is often difficult to say why a particular stretch of [...] text has come under the spotlight”. From one point of view, ‘cherry picking’, i.e. choosing examples that best fit the analyst’s preconceptions (Wodak & Meyer 2009:11), is to be avoided. From another, in order to be able to make the analysis as illuminating

as possible so as to arrive at a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study, it is preferable that the texts that are selected constitute a satisfactory basis for a fruitful discussion and hence enhanced understanding of the topic. It is therefore inevitable that the analyst's subjective ideas of what would constitute an appropriate selection of texts to some extent influence the selection procedure. The choice of material subjected to detailed interpretive analysis may not be fully justifiable on the basis of any objective criteria. It is nonetheless my aim to render the reasoning of the selection procedure as transparent as possible in order to make it open for criticism and questioning.

The methods for performing the interpretive analyses, which were described in sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3, will be employed to capture the rhetorical unfolding of entire texts as well as the diversity of discursive strategies that is represented in Parker's wine writing. In contrast to the examination of representations and the rudimentary explorations of argumentation and appraisal, which aim to bring out characteristic features of the material as a whole, the detailed study of a small portion of the material is intended to display patterns of persuasiveness in argumentation and appraisal in reviews with different evaluative orientations, not only to exhibit that which is most typical.

Several parameters have been taken into consideration in the procedure of selecting texts for interpretive analysis. Firstly, the numerical score that accompanies the tasting notes has been seen to provide a general idea of whether the reviews have positive or negative orientation. To cover the whole scale from very positive to very negative, five reviews were selected which range from 96–98 Parker points to 74–76 points. As illustrated by figure 4:1, only nine of the wines featuring in the corpus reviews have been rated below 86, which means that there are fewer texts to choose from towards the lower end of the scale. Similarly, only a handful of wines are rated from 97 and upwards. The vast majority of the reviews (70%) involve a numerical score between 88 and 92 points. Secondly, in order to ascertain that the selected reviews provide an appropriate starting point for illuminating discussions, one of the criteria when selecting the texts has been that they include production-related information as well as a description/evaluation of the tasting event. Third, based on the distribution over wine regions in the corpus, it was felt that both Bordeaux and Rhône should be represented among the selected texts. The number one priority when selecting the texts has however been the numerical score.

In order to select an appropriate sample for the presentation of detailed interpretive analyses, five texts were retrieved from the original data set of 200 reviews on the basis of the ideas presented above. I decided to delimit the exposition to five texts for two reasons: First, based on Wodak & Meyer's (2009:31) notion of 'completeness' (see section 3.2), the presentation of close interpretive scrutiny of the five selected texts have been understood to constitute a satisfactory complement to the characterization of the entire material given in the exploratory and rudimentary analyses. In other words, the incorporation of more texts in the exhibition of close interpretive analyses would not

lead to any significant new insights. Second, since I have chosen to present the analyses of the five texts in their entirety in order to allow the reader to follow and thereby have the possibility to agree or disagree with my interpretations, the presentation of five reviews has been felt to be enough so as not to exhaust the reader of the present enquiry.

In the following, I present the five selected reviews as they appear on *The Wine Advocate's* website.<sup>58</sup> The presentation includes an introduction of background knowledge about the wine-producing estates as well as the districts where the estates are located. This contextual information is important for the general understanding of the topic under investigation and crucial for the presentation of the detailed analyses given in chapters 6 and 7. The first text exposed to close scrutiny below is the review of Château Le Bon Pasteur. Figure 4:2 represents the review in its entirety:

2003 Bon Pasteur				
A Bordeaux Blend Dry Red Table wine from Pomerol, Bordeaux, France				
Source	Reviewer	Rating	Maturity	Current (Release) Cost
Wine Advocate # 164 Apr 2006	Robert Parker	89	Drink: 2007 - 2020	\$46 (45)
<p>The home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist, Michel Rolland, and his equally talented wife, oenologist Dany Rolland, Bon Pasteur's 2003 has turned out extremely well for such a challenging vintage, better, in fact, than many Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees. Sweet black raspberries, cherries, and smoky herb aromas jump from the glass of this tasty, round, moderately tannic, succulent, low acid Pomerol. Lush, medium-bodied, and sensual, it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age, and should drink well for 12-14.</p>				

**Figure 4:2** Review of Château Le Bon Pasteur 2003, copied from *The Wine Advocate*

As indicated by the heading, Château Le Bon Pasteur has been rated 89 on the Parker scale from 50 to 100. This text has been selected to represent the vast majority of the corpus texts in that it deals with a wine that the writer has appreciated to a moderate, but not a maximum, degree. True, a large number of other texts could have been chosen instead of this particular review. It has nonetheless been felt appropriate to include, particularly since it deals with a wine from the Pomerol appellation, which is located on the right bank of the Garonne estuary in Bordeaux.<sup>59</sup> The corpus contains 15 reviews of Pomerol wines, which have been rated from 86 to 94, i.e. Pomerol wines figure neither


<sup>58</sup> The reviews cannot be accessed without subscription to *The Wine Advocate*.

<sup>59</sup> A map of the Bordeaux appellations is accessible on this website [http://www.terroir-france.com/wine/bordeaux\\_map.htm](http://www.terroir-france.com/wine/bordeaux_map.htm). Date of access 24 October 2011.

among the highest ranked wines, nor among those that have received the lowest numerical scores.

For reasons of climate, the predominant grape variety in Pomerol is Merlot, which ripens early and is therefore likely to be ready for harvest before the frosts arrive. Small amounts of Cabernet Franc and/or Malbec may be included. While there is no official classification of wines from the Pomerol district, there is however an unofficial hierarchy based on the history of the wines' reputation. 14–18 Pomerol estates are considered to produce wine of noteworthy quality (“Cru Classé”), among these Château Pétrus, which has a long-standing reputation as being the world’s most expensive wine and therefore regarded as “Cru Hors Classe”.<sup>60</sup> Château Le Bon Pasteur is not included in the group of Pomerol “Crus Classés”. As indicated in the heading, the price of this wine is \$46.<sup>61</sup>

The second text to be scrutinized is the review of Château Angélu 2005. The figure below shows the review as it appears in the online version of *The Wine Advocate*:

2005 Angelus				
Angelus 				
A Bordeaux Blend Dry Red Table wine from St Emilion, Bordeaux, France				
Source	Reviewer	Rating	Maturity	Current (Release) Cost
Wine Advocate # 164 Apr 2006	Robert Parker	(96-98+)	Drink: 2010 - 2030	\$263-\$460
<p>Could this be the most profound Angelus yet made by the brilliant Hubert de Bouard since he turned this once under-achieving estate around in the mid-eighties? A blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc, the spectacular, inky/blue/purple-hued 2005 (7,080 cases; 14.5% natural alcohol) exhibits an extraordinary projected nose of blueberries, blackberries, liqueur of minerals, flowers, and subtle, toasty new oak. Magnificently concentrated, displaying a seamless integration of acidity, wood, tannin, and alcohol, a soaring mid-palate, and a finish that lasts over 60 seconds, this is a wine of compelling potential. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2030+.</p>				

**Figure 4:3 Review of Château Angelus 2005, copied from *The Wine Advocate***

<sup>60</sup> The local norms for the categorization of wine quality in Pomerol refer to the history of the wine’s reputation in the wine world, which has resulted in an unofficial hierarchy. Information about the unofficial hierarchy of Pomerol wine can be found at for instance <http://www.youcellar.com/en/classification-pomerol.php> and <http://www.cellarnotes.net/pomerol.html>.

<sup>61</sup> The prices that figure in the reviews’ heading or technical card are from December 2007. This slot in the reviews is continuously updated in accordance with the wine’s current price. The website <http://www.wine-searcher.com/find/bon+pasteur/2003> lists a range of prices from \$35-88 for Bon Pasteur. Date of access 28 May 2010.

Château Angélu is an estate belonging to the wine district of St Émilion, which is also located on the right bank of the Garonne estuary, bordering on Pomerol. The principal grape variety in St Émilion is Merlot. Smaller quantities of Cabernet Franc, Cabernet Sauvignon and Malbec may be included. Of all the Bordeaux appellation, St Émilion is the area where the wines' level of alcohol is traditionally the highest. Dealing with a wine that has received a very high, almost maximum, numerical ranking, i.e. 96–98 out of 100 points, the review of Château Angélu represents a minority of the corpus texts (see figure 4:1). The comparison between moderate and high degree of appreciation is believed to reveal variation in Parker's writing with respect to the features explored throughout the presentation of detailed interpretive analyses. This particular review has been selected among the few texts targeting wines that are rated above 95. It is felt to be representative of these wines, particularly since all of the highest ranked wines in the corpus are from St Émilion.

Château Angélu has the second highest ranking in the official classification system of red wine from St Émilion, which means that it is a highly regarded wine also by French standards. The official rank of Angélu is indicated by the symbol of a castle in the heading of the review. The heading indicates that the wine's cost varies between \$263–460.<sup>62</sup>

The classification system of St Émilion wines was introduced during the second half of the 20th century. It is updated every ten years. Only two St Émilion wines are currently ranked higher than Château Angélu, which belongs to the group labelled "Premier Grand Cru Classé B".<sup>63</sup>

The next text selected for the presentation of close interpretive scrutiny is the review of Château Bolaire 2003, which received the numerical rating 85. This review has been selected on the grounds that it represents a different group of corpus texts, namely those that have inspired a low degree of appreciation. The figure below shows the review of Bolaire as it appears in *The Wine Advocate* online:

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<sup>62</sup> A search on the website Wine Searcher shows current prices ranging from \$238–499. Available at <http://www.wine-searcher.com>. Date of access 28 May 2010.

<sup>63</sup> The two top-ranked St Émilion wine estates (Premier Grand Cru Classé A) are Château Ausone and Château Cheval Blanc. The current St Émilion classification was effectuated in 1996. An update of this classification in 2006 was overruled due to the suspicion of partiality on the part of the panel.

2003 Bolaire Bordeaux Superieur				
A Bordeaux Blend Dry Red Table wine from Bordeaux Superieur, Bordeaux, France				
Source	Reviewer	Rating	Maturity	Current (Release) Cost
Wine Advocate # 164 Apr 2006	Robert Parker	85	Drink: 2007 - 2013	\$20 (25)
<p>Although 2003 is Bolaire's debut vintage, it appears this will be a serious estate for consumers to keep an eye on. Moreover, it will be an original one given the incredibly high percentage of Petit Verdot (39%) planted in the vineyard. The remaining vines include Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Bolaire's wines are imported exclusively by Lou Kapcsandy. Although light, herbaceous, and revealing jagged, stemmy tannins, the 2003 exhibits surprisingly complex aromatics. Anticipated maturity: 2007-2013.</p>				


**Figure 4:4 Review of Château Bolaire 2003, copied from *The Wine Advocate***

Château Bolaire is situated in the wine district known as Haut-Médoc, which is located on the left bank of the Garonne estuary, i.e. in the part of Bordeaux that was the focus of the first official classification of red Bordeaux wine, effectuated in 1855. Bolaire, however, is not a “Cru classé”, but merely a generic wine which is only entitled to the less prestigious label “Bordeaux Supérieur”.<sup>64</sup> The price of this wine is considerably more modest compared to the two previous ones: The current cost is reported to be \$20 in the heading of this review.<sup>65</sup>

Only four wines ranked 85 are represented among the corpus reviews. Three of these come from left bank wine districts. Although they represent a small fraction of the corpus, these texts are nonetheless particularly interesting from the point of view of communicative diversity, since they represent the pivotal point between positive and negative orientation. I have therefore chosen to include another text from this group, namely the review of Château Cantemerle. The figure below displays the Cantemerle review as it appears in *The Wine Advocate*:

<sup>64</sup> According to the classification of red Bordeaux wine from 1855, four of the five estates ranked “Premier Grand Crus Classé” are situated in Médoc, Château Lafite, Château Latour, Château Margaux and Mouton. The fifth Premier Grand Cru Classé château, Haut-Brion, is located in the Graves district. Another 50–60 left bank estates are ranked “Grand Cru Classé” in accordance with the same classification. Château Bolaire is not included in this group.

<sup>65</sup> Wine Searcher specifies the wine's current price as \$20–23. <http://www.wine-searcher.com/find/bolaire/2003>. Date of access 28 May 2010.

<b>2003 Cantemerle</b>				
Cantemerle 				
A Bordeaux Blend Dry Red Table wine from Macau, Bordeaux, France				
Source	Reviewer	Rating	Maturity	Current (Release) Cost
Wine Advocate # 164 Apr 2006	Robert Parker	85	Drink: 2006 - 2016	\$24-\$38 (25)
This is a competent but uninspiring effort. Aromas of figs, plums, and black cherries emerge from this straightforward, soft, medium-bodied, simple, one-dimensional offering. Drink it over the next decade.				

**Figure 4:5 Review of Château Cantemerle 2003, copied from *The Wine Advocate***

Just like BOLAIRE, Cantemerle has also been given 85 points on the Parker scale from 50 to 100. The inclusion of the Cantemerle review alongside the BOLAIRE review will be further discussed and justified in the interpretive analyses of this review, which are presented in sections 6.2.4 and 7.2.4. Château Cantemerle is also located on the left bank of the Garonne estuary in the appellation of Haut-Médoc. BOLAIRE and Cantemerle are in fact neighbouring estates situated in the vicinity of the prestigious MARGAUX appellation, which hosts one of the five estates, Château MARGAUX, that were officially awarded the status of Premier Grand Cru Classé in the classification of 1855. In contrast to BOLAIRE, which is a generic wine, Cantemerle is entitled to the label “Grand Cru Classé” since it was included in the 1855 classification of Haut-Médoc estates.<sup>66</sup> Its status as “Cru Classé” is symbolized by the castle emblem in the heading. Furthermore, according to the information in the heading, the price of this wine varies from \$24–38.<sup>67</sup>

The last review to be scrutinized in the interpretive analyses that are presented in chapters 6 and 7 targets a Rhône wine, namely Bernard Burgaud Côte Rôtie 2004, which is reproduced in its entirety below:

<sup>66</sup> According to the official ranking system of 1855, Cantemerle is classified as a “cinquième grand cru”.

<sup>67</sup> Wine Searcher gives the price range \$24–36. <http://www.wine-searcher.com/find/cantemerle/2003>. Date of access 28 May 2010.



<b>2004 Bernard Burgaud Cote Rotie</b>				
A Syrah Dry Red Table wine from Cote Rotie, Northern Rhone, Rhone, France				
Source	Reviewer	Rating	Maturity	Current (Release) Cost
Wine Advocate # 163 Feb 2006	Robert Parker	(74-76)	Drink: N/A	\$47-\$56
A disappointing offering from this generally reliable producer. Burgaud's 2004 Cote Rotie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields. Diluted, charmless, herbal, and thin, it is a wine to be avoided.				

**Figure 4:6** The review of Bernard Burgaud Côte Rôtie 2004, copied from *The Wine Advocate*

Just like the two previous reviews, Burgaud has also been selected as a representative from a corpus group involving merely a few texts, namely the reviews of the wines that have received the lowest numerical scores, i.e. wines that the writer has not appreciated. The wines ranked below 85 are all from the Rhône region, which means that the Burgaud review is representative of this group in terms of regional location. Burgaud's price is approximately the same as Bon Pasteur which was represented above in figure 4:2, i.e. \$47–56.<sup>68</sup>

Côte Rôtie is a wine growing area located in the northern-most part of Rhône.<sup>69</sup> Rhône does not have an official classification of wine estates. Côte Rôtie is however one of the eight most distinguished wine areas in this part of Rhône, where the wines are dominated by the Syrah grape.<sup>70</sup> While this review is not representative of the whole corpus, it is nevertheless believed that a detailed investigation of this text will contribute to the illumination of the diversity of discursive strategies represented in Parker's writing.

This completes the introduction of the reviews that have been selected for the presentation of close interpretive analysis using the methodological tools provided by argumentation theory and Appraisal theory, which were presented in sections 3.2.2 and 3.2.3.

### 4.3 SUMMARY

This chapter has provided a description of the material that has been selected for this investigation along with the strategies governing the selection process, the intention being to provide clear insight into this procedure. Section 4.1 in-

<sup>68</sup> Wine Searcher specifies Burgaud's price to \$40-50. <http://www.wine-searcher.com/find/bernard+burgaud+cote+rotie/2004>. Date of access 28 May 2010.

<sup>69</sup> It should be pointed out that there are several wine producers in Côte Rôtie, Bernard Burgaud being one of these producers. This estate is entitled to the label "Appellation Côte Rôtie Contrôlée".

<sup>70</sup> The entire Rhône region includes 13 Grandes Appellations Locales, which are popularly referred to as "Les Crus". Eight of these are situated in the northern part.

roduced the relatively large material collected for the exploratory analysis of representations as well as the rudimentary analyses of argumentation and appraisal. This data set includes 200 reviews, which assess 150 wines from Bordeaux and 50 wines from Rhône. Section 4.2 gave an account of the five reviews selected for interpretive argumentation and appraisal analysis. The introduction of these reviews also provided a brief report about the estates that are responsible for the production of the reviewed wines. This information is of general importance as contextual background knowledge and of more specific significance for the interpretive analyses presented in chapters 6 and 7. In view of the idea that it may never be completely possible to justify the choice of material, the presentation given in sections 4.1 and 4.2 is nonetheless believed to render the selection procedure transparent.

## 5 PERSUASIVENESS IN REPRESENTATIONS

This chapter presents an exploratory outline of the corpus of 200 reviews that was introduced in the preceding chapter. As indicated in section 3.2.1, the term representations, which has been chosen as a heading to bring together the contents of this chapter, incorporates a miscellany of explicit and implicit characteristics of the material. In accordance with the theoretical approach of the present study (see section 3.1), knowledge about the socio-cultural and institutional practice as well as general world knowledge is continuously drawn on in order to explore the text, which is regarded as the materialized result of social interaction. Chapter 2 has given a presentation of elements of the socio-cultural and discursive practice that are crucial in order to understand the communicative event that is the centre of attention of this investigation.

First, in order to describe how the tasting notes are framed, section 5.1 offers an account of the prefatory resources that meet the audience on *The Wine Advocate* webpage. Subsequently, section 5.2 provides what has been labelled a content analysis, namely an overview of the information included in the 200 text data set. The purpose of the content analysis is to offer a description of the data so as to give a preliminary idea of the relative frequencies of different kinds of information appearing in Parker's reviews. Section 5.3 proposes to divide the texts into thematic units, which are understood to be separable from one another based on temporality, spatial frames and evidentiality. The analysis also incorporates a discussion of modality and an exploration of patterns of transitivity in the representation of events of the different thematic units.

### 5.1 REPRESENTATIONAL FRAME

Although it is the linguistic realization of the social interaction under investigation that will be in focus, i.e. the text in the wine reviews that were presented in chapter 4, it has been felt appropriate to first explore the introductory resources drawn on in the construction of the website through which the tasting notes are accessible. These resources are of significance for the present study since they

function as a representational frame for the texts. In addition, the lay-out and choice of representational material can be understood to contribute to moulding the writer's authorial persona, his relation to the purported audience as well as the preferred world view.

*The Wine Advocate's* official homepage is dominated by a photograph of Robert Parker, which is positioned in the very centre of the page, surrounded by links and other resources. Parker, who is casually dressed in an inconspicuous dark blue polo shirt, is posing in front of a stone stair case, conceivably belonging to a building on some wine estate. While not standing out as a prominent feature of the background, the stone stair case nonetheless serves to locate Parker spatially in the culture of wine rather than in the Maryland office where most of his tasting and writing allegedly take place (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker's rating system, McCoy 2005). His hand is raised towards the camera holding out an almost empty glass of red wine towards the viewer, but tilting the glass with an absent-minded gesture rather than as if to propose a formal toast. Parker does not seem occupied by tasting the wine in the glass at the moment, because he is neither looking at it, nor does he seem to be smelling it. Instead, his eyes look straight into the camera, thus meeting the viewers'. According to Kress & Van Leeuwen (2006), images involving represented participants that meet the viewer's gaze are fundamentally different from images where represented participants do not look at the viewer. In the first case, viewers are directly addressed, a form of visual representation that Kress & van Leeuwen refer to as a 'demand'. In the second case, viewers are positioned as observers, and no direct relationship is established between the represented character and the viewer, a situation that Kress & van Leeuwen refer to as an 'offer'. In addition to establishing direct contact between the represented character and the viewer, this form of depiction functions to draw attention towards Parker rather than towards the wine in the almost empty glass, which presumably is otherwise the topic of interest that the sender and the addressee can be expected to have in common. As a contrastive example, the website of the British wine critic Jancis Robinson presents a photograph of the author at a dinner table in the company of others. She is not looking at the viewer, but seems rather to be engaged in a discussion with her dinner partner, perhaps over the white wine in the glass that she is holding. Interpreted by means of Kress & van Leeuwen's tools, the image of Robinson can be seen as an 'offer' rather than a 'demand'.<sup>71</sup>

The rhetorical function of the picture of Parker on *The Wine Advocate* homepage is first and foremost to establish a direct relationship between the sender and the audience without any interference of the topic that is conceivably the concern of both parties. The sender's endeavour to establish a personal

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<sup>71</sup> Jancis Robinson's website is available at <http://www.jancisrobinson.com/>. Date of access 25 October 2011.

contact with the addressee is reinforced by the friendly smile on his face, which defines the ‘demand’ as one of affable bonding. Furthermore, the image is framed as a medium close shot. The fact that Parker is cut off approximately at the waist indicates the establishment of a personal but not intimate relationship with the viewers. In terms of vertical angle, the picture is positioned at eye level, which construes the represented character and the viewers as being in a relationship of equality (Kress & Van Leeuwen 2006). The arrangement brings to mind an amateur photograph of an ordinary man who is a little uncomfortable in front of the camera and not accustomed to posing when getting his picture taken, i.e. a sincere, natural and unaffected character. The viewer is thereby placed in the same position as the amateur photographer, conceivably a close friend or relative.

The choice of visual material on the homepage can be understood to accentuate the character of the person responsible for the enterprise. Parker’s authorial persona is supported by a corkscrew intentionally designed as a crusader’s cross (Langewiesche 2000), which appears in two places: at the top left side of the page in what is traditionally taken to be the natural place for given information in newspaper lay-out and immediately to the right of the photograph of Parker, in the place where new information is usually placed. The corkscrew is intended to highlight Parker’s manifesto as a crusader siding with the consumer against underachieving wine producers who charge undue prices for inadequate products (Langewiesche 2000). Parker’s signature is inserted together with the corkscrew in both places, which can be seen as an important semiotic resource in this context, emphasizing Parker’s function as a guarantor for *The Wine Advocate*’s recommendations.

While the photograph of Parker, his signature and the corkscrew are stable, the image inserted at the top right side varies every time the page is opened. About a dozen different pictures are displayed, for instance Italian wine estates, German wine bottles on a wine rack and hands typing on a keyboard, an image which together with the heading “The One True Voice of the Wine Consumer” emphasizes the independent status of the magazine with respect to the wine trade. The top right side of the page is the natural place for new information, a phenomenon that is exploited in the design of the homepage to draw attention to both the topic that the writers and audience devote their joint attention to and the status of the magazine as engaged in independent, investigating journalism rather than promotion of wines. The alternating images at the top right side of the page are however much smaller than the photograph of Parker as a stable semiotic resource in a focal position.

In contrast to Parker himself, Parker’s collaborators are only presented with their names on the homepage, although photographs of these other “wine advo-

cates” are accessible via links.<sup>72</sup> The fact that their signatures are missing altogether signals the supremacy of Parker as the publisher in charge. It is not impossible to imagine a contrastive lay-out where all the writers, including Parker, would be presented by means of the alternating images on the right hand side of the webpage and the topic of joint reader-writer interest, i.e. a glass or bottle of wine, would be positioned at centre stage and thereby emphasized. This representational frame has however not been opted for.<sup>73</sup>

In addition to the visual resources, several quotations are collected on *The Wine Advocate* website: A statement made by former French President Chirac for instance specifies Parker as being “the most followed and influential critic for French wine in the entire world” (*The Wine Advocate*. About The Wine Advocate). Furthermore, former American President Clinton is said to use Parker as his “reference for making a proper wine buying decision”. (*The Wine Advocate*. About Robert Parker). Besides the references and quotations of which the source is specified, the following summary of the purported general opinion with respect to *The Wine Advocate*’s status is given:

Today, virtually every knowledgeable observer agrees that The Wine Advocate exerts the most significant influence on the serious wine consumer’s buying habits and trends not only in America, but in France, England, Switzerland, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, Russia, Mexico, Brazil, and China (*The Wine Advocate*. About Robert Parker).

The general impression of the resources employed as representational frame on *The Wine Advocate*’s homepage is that the arrangement functions to ascertain the weight of Parker’s authority in the world of wine and establish a direct relationship with the reader. The importance of the representational frame for the research questions will be resumed in the conclusion (section 8.1), where the empirical results of the study are summarized.

After this exploratory outline of the resources that are drawn on as representational frame, I now turn to the wine reviews that are the focus of attention in this study.

## 5.2 CONTENT ANALYSIS

This section presents a descriptive overview of the content in the data set reviews. The preliminary content analysis enables observation of what kind of in-

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<sup>72</sup> The online version of *The Wine Advocate* goes by the name of *Robert Parker’s Wine Advocates*, thus incorporating the eight other writers that are currently employed to cover the world’s wine regions. I will however continue to refer to the magazine under its established name.

<sup>73</sup> I thank Dr Forceville, Department of Media Studies, the University of Amsterdam, for comments on an earlier version of the analysis of the visual resources drawn on in the construction of *The Wine Advocate* homepage.

formation is more or less typically included in Parker’s wine writing and also gives an idea about the kind of information that could have been included but is not. In order to assist the systematization of content, Caballero’s (2007) organization schema for wine tasting notes, which was represented in figure 2:1, will be employed as a tool to display the occurrences of different types of contents. As explained in section 2.2, Caballero’s investigation is based on tasting notes from the online versions of *The Wine Advocate*, *Wine Spectator* and *Wine Enthusiast Magazine*, three American subscription-regulated wine magazines. Caballero’s schema therefore provides an appropriate starting point for an exploration of the 200 selected texts. Since tasting notes may vary depending on how many and which of the slots in the schema are filled, a phenomenon that is signalled by the *and/or* column in table 2:1, it is of interest to examine which slots in the schema are more frequently instantiated by the 200 texts. The table below, which is a slightly modified version of Caballero’s organization schema, displays the informational content in the data set reviews that are currently under study:

**Table 5:1 Content in 200 tasting notes**

<b>Wine: estate, year, wine type, grape variety, appellation,</b>	<b>200</b>	
Reviewer	200	
Numerical score	200	
Drink time	183	
Price	172	
Name of estate and/or appellation	162	
Year	171	
Producer/oenologist	55	(51 with name)
Vintage	11	
Production technique	11	
Soil/location/pedigree	27	
Level of alcohol	19	
Cases/bottles made/yields	19	
Grape composition	52	
Assessment of the wine’s color	104	
Assessment of the wine’s nose (aroma and bouquet)	180	
Assessment of the wine’s palate (flavors and texture or mouth-feel)	192	
Potential consumers	12	
Prospective consumption span	181	
Recommended food	0	
Importer	48 <sup>74</sup>	

<sup>74</sup> 40 of these occurrences make reference to one or more specified American importers of the wine. In eight occurrences, the idea of a potential importer is brought into the colloquy by means of the com-

Table 5:1 is designed to give a preliminary overview of the content in the reviews that are included in the data set. In the application of the schema to the current material it was observed that the boundaries between the categories proposed by the table are not always easy to maintain. This is due to the fact that despite the texts' comparatively clear and predictable generic structure, there is still a great deal of variation regarding textual realization in individual texts. In addition, it is not always self-evident whether an expression that appears in the text should be at all regarded as an instance of a particular category, since the meaning content can be more or less explicitly referred to by the text. Potential consumers, for instance, could be seen as always present in view of their communicative function as the intended audience of the message. This scale of presence will be further explored in subsequent analysis chapters. Consequently, it is important to point out that the figures given in table 5:1 are to be seen as approximations based on preliminary explorations of the texts rather than precise renderings of the texts' information content. While the table does not pretend to give an exact account, it nevertheless provides a tentative idea of the relative frequencies of the content in the data set.

In addition to what can be referred to as the reviews' 'technical card'<sup>75</sup> (Caballero 2007, Caballero & Suárez-Toste 2010), which provides a first introduction of the wine producing estate's name, the year of production, the reviewer's name, a numerical rating, the proposed consumption span and the wine's current price, all of the database texts also include some kind of description/assessment of the sensory inputs of the tasting event, i.e. the visual, olfactory and gustatory/tactile impressions. As demonstrated by the numbers in the table, the aspects that are most frequently referred to are the wine's nose (180 instances) and palate (192 instances). The visual impression of the wine, however, is only referred to in about half of the database reviews (104 occurrences). 90% of the texts include a specification of the reviewed wine's consumption span. This information is normally given in the technical card as well as in the tasting note, except in occasional instances (two occurrences) where the drink time information is only included in the technical card. Furthermore, information concerning the grape composition and the producer or oenologist responsible for making the wine is relatively frequent with 55 and 52 occurrences, respectively. However, as illustrated by the table, none of the data set reviews include suggestions regarding the type of food that would combine well with the reviewed wine. Considering the importance assigned in the French culture to the combination of food and wine, this is a striking absence in Parker's texts, the significance of which will be further explored below.

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ment "No known American importer". Only four of the 150 Bordeaux reviews involve a reference to the importer, while this information is listed for 44 of the Rhône wines.

<sup>75</sup> The technical card is demarcated in table 5:1 by means of the line.



### 5.3 THEMATIC UNITS IN PARKER’S WINE REVIEWS

In this section, I will divide the content included in Parker’s reviews into thematic units. From this perspective, the information about the production of the wine is regarded as belonging to one thematic unit. Furthermore, the description and assessment of the tasting event is seen as making up another thematic unit. Finally, the reference to the prospective consumption of the wine is treated as a third thematic unit. In addition to these three thematic units, the technical card can be seen to have the function of a heading, drawing initial attention to a number of aspects, such as the numerical score, the proposed drink time and the wine’s price (in those cases where this information is provided). In the table below, the review of Château Cadet-Bon 2005 has been broken down into these thematic units as a demonstration of the methodological procedure:

**Table 5:2 Thematic units of the review of 2005 Château Cadet-Bon**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	DRINK TIME
2005 Cadet Bon A Bordeaux blend dry table wine from St Émilion, Bordeaux, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: (88-90) Maturity: 2010-2020 Cost: -	This estate is finally making a qualitative comeback now that Stephane Derenon- court is consulting. The 2005, a powerful effort at 14.5% alco- hol,	exhibits a deep ru- by/purple color along with notes of sweet, mineral-laced black cherries and currants, medium body, plenty of concentration, and moderate tannin in the finish.	Anticipated ma- turity: 2010-2020.

In the Cadet Bon review, the thematic units are clearly separable in the surface form of the message. Among the 200 data set reviews, there is however variation regarding the order of the presentation, a phenomenon that is exemplified by the review of Les Angelot de Gracia:

**Table 5:3 Thematic units in the review of 2005 Les Angelots de Gracia**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSUMPTION
2005 Les Angelots de Gracia A Bordeaux blend dry table wine from St Émilion, Bordeaux, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: (91-93+) Drink: 2006-2026 Cost: -	From the idiosyncratic proprietor of Gracia, this tiny garage operation has fashioned a provocative blend of 80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc with 13+% alcohol.  (from incredibly tiny yields of 21 hectoliters per hectare)	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 <del>from incredibly tiny yields of 21 hectoliters per hectare,</del> this is a major league claret	that should drink well for two decades or more.

As illustrated by the Gracia text, the thematic units that have been identified are not necessarily presented in a unified manner in the surface form of the message. Although the insertion (*from incredibly tiny yields of 21 hectoliters per hectare*) is placed together with the description of the perceptual experience of this wine, it is nonetheless seen as belonging to the thematic unit devoted to production-related aspects. For the purpose of the investigation carried out in this chapter, the thematic units will be regarded as units even if they are split up in the surface form of the message. This analytical strategy will be pursued in the following subsections, which are devoted to a discussion of distinctive explicit and implicit characteristics of these thematic units.

While all the 200 data set reviews include a heading and a thematic unit devoted to description and assessment of the sensory impressions of the wine, the thematic units concerning production-related aspects and the prospective consumption of the wine are not always instantiated.<sup>76</sup> The table below gives an overview of the instantiation of thematic units in the material:

<sup>76</sup> As pointed out above, there are also reviews in *The Wine Advocate* that only include a heading and the comment “No tasting note was provided”. These were however not included in the data set selected for this investigation (see section 4.1).

**Table 5:4 Thematic units in corpus material**

<b>WA issue</b>	<b>HEADING</b>	<b>PRODUCTION</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>CONSUMPTION</b>
Bordeaux	150	101	150	144
Rhône	50	22	50	37
Total	200	123	200	181

As indicated by table 5:4, the thematic units relating to description/assessment of sensory perceptions and prospective consumption are more frequently instantiated in the data set reviews than the thematic unit devoted to production-related aspects. Two thirds of the reviews from the Bordeaux issue include a production-related unit, while less than half of the Rhône reviews include aspects related to the production of the wine in the tasting note text. Following Graddol (2006, see section 2.2), the fact that production-related aspects are more frequently included in the reviews devoted to Bordeaux wines can be interpreted as an indication that more overall importance is assigned to the wines from this region compared to the wines from Rhône. This phenomenon also entails an implicit evaluation of the Bordeaux wines as more worthy of attention. Furthermore, the same situation also applies to the thematic unit concerning the wines' prospective consumption span, which is more frequently instantiated in the Bordeaux reviews (96%) than in the Rhône reviews (74%). This may in part be due to the fact that Bordeaux wines are known to be among the most long-lived wines in the world, and the reference to the wine's prospective consumption span may be seen as more relevant when relating to a potentially durable wine, which perhaps also requires extended aging in order to acquire maturity.

The difference in the attention devoted to Bordeaux and Rhône wines, respectively, is also signalled by the number of words included in the reviews. As noted in section 4.1 (see table 4:1), while the average length of the Bordeaux reviews is 69 words, the corresponding figure for the Rhône reviews is only 45. It is also true that the longest review (206 words) concerns a Bordeaux wine while the shortest text (13 words) reviews a Rhône wine. It should however be kept in mind that the data set of 200 reviews from 2006 selected for this investigation represents a small fraction of Parker's wine writing. I will therefore refrain from drawing too far-reaching conclusions based on this type of quantitative indications.

In the following, I will discuss in turn the heading, the production-related unit, the unit devoted to description/assessment of the perceptual experience of the wine and the consumption-oriented unit. In this exploration of the data, I will be concerned with features that are typical of the different units in the corpus as a whole rather than with presentations in individual texts, although individual texts will be used as illustrations. In addition, I will consider implicit aspects associated with the different units that are not observable in the surface form of the message but which can nonetheless be accessed on the basis of

available information about the institutional and discursive practice as well as general world knowledge. A recurrent theme in the discussion will be the methodological problem of addressing the continuum between explicit and implicit realization.

### 5.3.1 HEADING

The heading occurs in initial position in the reviews, which is why I have chosen to begin my presentation with this component. It should however be made clear that the heading cannot be seen as a thematic unit in the same way as the other review components that will be discussed below. Rather, it is a summary of different kinds of information, some of which is included in the tasting note text as well.

As an initial remark, it is worth observing that the names of French wine districts and estates that figure in the headings of all of the corpus reviews conceivably constitute an important part of the attraction that these wines have for consumers who are anxious to display a sophisticated identity by means of their consumption patterns (see chapter 1): The very labels function to captivate the audience's attention and construe the writer and his audience as co-participants of a community that has access to and assigns importance to the prestige and refinement associated with the French wine culture, which can be seen as the cradle of this prestigious commodity. In that sense, the château and district names in the headings function to provide the requisites for joint attention to be initiated. In Langewiesche's (2000) interview, Parker's ex co-worker Pierre Rovani implies that aristocratic French wine labels can function as consumption trophies in the same way as for instance an expensive sports car. Many purchasers and collectors may never even drink the wine, and if they do, they may not know how to appreciate the perceptual difference between a cheap, simple generic wine and a highly esteemed, extremely expensive, classified French wine. The wine estate's name as well as the price can thus contribute to the construction of the wine as an object of desire. I observe in passing that in addition to their initial position in the heading, the wine-producing estate's name and/or the name of the wine district are frequently mentioned in the tasting notes as well. In all, 162 of the 200 data set texts include the name of a French wine estate or appellation.

In addition to the name of the wine-producing estate and the district where the estate is located, the heading also includes information about the wines' price, i.e. their release cost as well as their current price across a range of major retailers.<sup>77</sup> An exploration of the data set shows that the average price of the

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<sup>77</sup> The information provided about the wines' price varies, depending on the price range of the wine that is being reviewed. For very expensive wines, the release cost may be given alongside the range from lowest to highest price advertised by different wine stores, retailers and well-known wine websites, for instance <http://www.cellartracker.com/intro.asp>. For wines that are ranked very favourably by Parker, the current cost may involve an increment of several times the release cost. I thank Dr

wines is \$99.<sup>78</sup> As previously noted with regard to the subscription cost of *The Wine Advocate*, the relatively high price of the wines that the reviews deal with can be seen to implicitly include those readers that have the necessary economical means and find it worthwhile to spend such extensive amounts of money on their wine consumption. Simultaneously, the cost specification can also be understood to have an excluding function of those consumers for whom such expensive luxury products are not within reach.

However, what is taken to be the most important part of the heading, which is included in all the headings in the data set, is the numerical score that each wine is provided with. It has already been observed that the numerical system for scoring wine that Parker employs is copied from the American grading system, which builds on a scale from 50 to 100. The general idea is that points corresponding to the wine's quality in terms of appearance, nose and palate are added to the given 50, which are awarded to all wines just for being there.

The 100-point system was invented by Parker as a reaction against the 20-point scale, which had been developed at the University of California, Davis.<sup>79</sup> While the general idea behind the Davis scale is that points are taken away in accordance with the flaws that the wine is discovered to have, the ambition behind Parker's 100-point scale was positive evaluation, i.e. that the wines should be given points for qualities that they were found to have rather than have points taken away for defects (McCoy 2005:63). The 20-point scale is still used at the University of California, Davis, as well as in Europe, for instance by Jancis Robinson. In addition to these two wine rating systems, a five star system is used by the British wine magazine *Decanter*, and various other star systems are employed by critics writing for newspapers.<sup>80</sup>

On *The Wine Advocate* website (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker's rating system), the procedure of calculating a wine's numerical score is specified as follows:

In terms of awarding points, my scoring system gives every wine a base of 50 points. The wine's general color and appearance merit up to 5 points. Since most wines today are well made, thanks to modern technology and the increased use

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Suárez Toste for providing this information about the prices listed in the headings of Parker's reviews.

<sup>78</sup> This figure is arrived at on the basis of the mean value of the price range for the 172 (see table 5:1) reviews whose headings are provided with a price specification. It should be observed that the prices display a great deal of variation from the cheapest wine in the data set, which costs \$14 to the most expensive, which costs \$3,623. While the average price is \$99, the median value of the cost specifications is 'merely' \$42.

<sup>79</sup> Information about the Davis scoring system is available at [http://finias.com/wine/ucd\\_scoring.htm](http://finias.com/wine/ucd_scoring.htm). Date of access 12 May 2010.

<sup>80</sup> A comparison of the various numerical rating systems for scoring wine is provided by Jancis Robinson at [http://www.jancisrobinson.com/files/pdfs/CT\\_score\\_equivalents.pdf](http://www.jancisrobinson.com/files/pdfs/CT_score_equivalents.pdf). Date of access 12 May 2010.

of professional oenologists, they tend to receive at least 4, often 5 points. The aroma and bouquet merit up to 15 points, depending on the intensity level and dimension of the aroma and bouquet as well as the cleanliness of the wine. The flavor and finish merit up to 20 points, and again, intensity of flavor, balance, cleanliness, and depth and length on the palate are all important considerations when giving out points. Finally, the overall quality level or potential for further evolution and improvement—aging—merits up to 10 points.

According to McCoy (2005:116–117), although Parker professes to have adhered to these steps in the beginning of his career, the process of determining the exact numerical score no longer follows this procedure. Instead, “in a flash of intuition [...] as if rising out of the glass” an exact number will appear to him “like a vision of the wine’s inner meaning, the exact measure of its inherent worth”.

Parker’s numerical system for scoring wine has had enormous impact among consumers (see e.g. McCoy 2005, Johnson 2005). This seems to be due to the factual character of the numerical description. The numerical system was initially designed to give an objective reflection of the wine’s quality (McCoy 2005:62–63), and many of Parker’s readers apparently tend to understand the numerical score to represent the ultimate truth about the wines’ quality, without the interference of human judgement: According to McCoy (2005:133) readers have marvelled at the fact that “Parker apparently had such a refined palate that he could detect the flavors and aromas that made an 87-point wine ever so slightly better than one to which he’d given 86”.

Although the idea that Parker’s 100-point scale constitutes an objective instrument for measuring a wine’s worth has become widespread among consumers worldwide, Parker’s colleagues, i.e. other wine critics, have expressed scepticism: A human taster is not a machine, and many things may affect a person’s perception of a wine at a particular moment, for instance the order in which different wines are tasted and even the mood of the taster. The well-known British wine critic Michael Broadbent, interviewed by McCoy (2005:172), declares that there is “no such thing as a 94 wine”.

In addition, according to McCoy (2005:172), the 100-point system does not leave enough room for diversity in wine taste, which has been a long-standing trade mark of the French wine-making tradition, since there are whole categories of wines that never get rated above 90, for instance Beaujolais, even though many of them can be considered perfect exemplars of their type. Furthermore, the numerical system does not take into consideration the price-quality relation. Neither does it assign any value to the advantage of being able to drink a wine young: According to McCoy (2005:132), Parker has in fact encouraged his readers “not to ignore 84- and 85-point wines, pointing out that they [are] often bargains that [can] be drunk sooner”, which raises the question why these wines should not be attributed with a higher score. Parker’s numerical system has therefore been described as “unwieldy” (McCoy 2005:85),

“flawed, unhelpful, and highly misleading” (McCoy 2005:168) by its critics. Still, among many Parker readers, it has become “an abbreviation, carved in stone and therefore “absolute” for all time”, and because of the power of the numerical system, it has become increasingly difficult for producers to sell 70- and 80-point wines (McCoy 2005:172). The enormous impact of Parker’s numerical system among today’s wine consumers is aptly illustrated by the following story from Johnson’s (2005:43) book *A life uncorked*:

The scene is a wine shop. Customer: ‘I’m afraid I didn’t think much of that Cabernet you sold me.’ Assistant: ‘Parker gave it a 90.’ Customer: ‘I’ll take a dozen, then.’

The impact of scores on consumer choices in general is supported by experiments carried out in marketing, where it has been found that a high rating by a generally trusted wine critic makes consumers feel they take a smaller risk, especially when buying an expensive product (Mueller et al. 2009).

As indicated by the expression “carved in stone” above, in terms of temporality the numerical score indicates a value that is always present, out of time, as a permanent attribute of the wine, i.e. regardless of who drinks it, how, when and with what kind of food it is drunk, its value will stay the same. The value thereby also becomes associated with universal space, i.e. it is independent of any specific location in space. The numerical score thereby implies absolute epistemic certainty. However, a certain restriction in epistemic certainty is indicated by the rating of wines that have been tasted from barrel. Instead of being given an exact number, the somewhat vague ranking of these wines leaves some, albeit limited, room for alternative rankings. This phenomenon is exemplified in the Cadet Bon text, which is provided with the numerical score of (88–90).<sup>81</sup>

The evidence underscoring the numerical evaluation is complex and difficult to lay bare. According to the description on *The Wine Advocate* website (see above) the numerical score is arrived at by adding together the perceptual evidence established through the senses of vision, smell, taste and mouthfeel. Furthermore, even though the reputation of the owner is said not to have any bearing on the rating, Parker’s description nonetheless promotes the value of “modern technology and the use of professional oenologists”. In addition to the

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<sup>81</sup> Andreas Larsson (personal communication) questions the reliability of tastings from barrel, arguing that it is next to impossible to establish the quality of a wine on the basis of what it tastes from barrel. Producers, he argues, therefore should not let wine critics taste their wines before bottling. However, a refusal to let critics taste from barrel might simultaneously appear as if the producer had something to hide (McCoy 2005:257). According to Langewiesche (2000) there is also a frantic demand among consumers for the so called “Bordeaux futures”, which “provide consumers with the pleasure of playing an insider’s role”. Due to Parker’s influence on consumer choices, traders in Bordeaux wine have become reluctant to negotiate wine prices with producers on the basis of their own judgements of the wines’ future potential. Instead, they wait for Parker’s scores before they negotiate the wines’ price.

descriptive-evaluative unit, the production-related unit of the review can also be understood to make up part of the evidence on which the numerical score is based. According to the specifications given by Parker, “potential for further evolution and improvement” is also taken into consideration in the numerical rating.

In order to result in sufficient plausibility for the audience to accept the number as a valid statement, the adding-up of perceptual experiences needs to be backed up by a knowledge base against which each particular wine can be judged. According to McCoy (2005:116), Parker possesses precisely the kind of knowledge base that is required: “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. Information about Parker’s experience is accessible to the audience through their contextual understanding, which contributes to enabling the numerical ranking to assume the status of a shared value.

### 5.3.2 PRODUCTION-RELATED UNIT

Following the heading, the thematic unit that is devoted to production-related renderings normally initiates the surface form of the tasting note presentation. 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 order of events.

A preliminary scrutiny of the data set shows that 105 reviews are iconic, i.e. in the surface form of the message, the presentation of production-related information precedes the unit devoted to description/assessment of the resulting wine itself.<sup>82</sup> In four of the reviews, the production-related unit appears in final position, after the two other thematic units, and in 14 of the reviews, the production-related unit is completely integrated into the description/assessment of the wine, a phenomenon that the following examples illustrate:

(5:1) 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...

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<sup>82</sup> It should be pointed out that at this stage in the enquiry I am concerned with what I have considered to be explicit references to production-related aspects. As will become clear in subsequent analyses (see chapters 6 and 7), production-related aspects may also be more or less implicitly conveyed, and the distinction between explicit and implicit reference is not always easy to make. The figures presented here are therefore referred to as ‘preliminary’ so as not to give the impression that they reflect the ultimate truth about the data.



- (5:2) 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 (5:1) the wine's aromatics, presumably perceived during the tasting event, are alluded to before the mentioning of the composition of different grape types, which is the result of choices made during the production process. In (5:2) 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. The importance of such insertions of production-related renderings into the part of the text that is otherwise devoted to description/assessment of the wine will be further discussed in chapters 6 and 7. Having briefly mentioned that the order of the presentation is not always iconic with respect to the course of events in the real world, I want to make it clear that in this chapter no extensive attention will be devoted to investigating the surface ordering of the message in individual texts, which has already been declared above in relation to the review of Les Angelots de Gracia (see table 5:3). The objective is rather to capture features that are characteristic of the material as a whole.

Based on general world knowledge, the production-related component of the reviews 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 experience, which will be further explored in section 5.3.3. 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 presentation of aspects related to the production of the wine. Instead, if the production-related units at all involve grammatical markers anchoring it in the past, the perfect is more frequently used, which the following example illustrates:

- (5:3) ...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 event described 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:

(5:3a) ...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 data set reviews to accentuate the relevance of the production-related unit for the present situation is the perfect. Another strategy that is frequently employed and which allows the writer to avoid the use of tense completely is ellipsis, in particular a form of ellipsis that can be referred to by means of the rhetorical term *zeugma* (Harris 2008).<sup>83</sup> According to Harris, zeugmatic structures are rhetorically useful for several reasons. First, they are economical in that repetition of the linking clause element can be avoided. Second, they create a connection between the two thoughts that are linked. Example (5:4) illustrates how a zeugma can be drawn on to link the presentation of production-related aspects to the portrayal of the tasting event's perceptual experiences:

(5:4) *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 zeugmatic 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. (5.4a) below, which is a constructed example, 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:

(5:4a) 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...

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<sup>83</sup> The following rhetorical definition of *zeugma* is given by Harris (2008): "Zeugma includes several similar rhetorical devices, all involving a grammatically correct linkage (or yoking together) of two or more parts of speech by another part of speech". Although it is Harris' definition that has been adopted in this study, it should be pointed out that there are also other accepted definitions of the term *zeugma*. In the linguistics literature (see for instance Croft & Cruse 2004) it is sometimes used to refer to a more specific rhetorical phenomenon, namely *syllipsis*, a particular type of semantic zeugma in which the parts of speech that are yoked together are incongruent, which often results in a humorous effect. The Free Dictionary gives the following example of *syllipsis*: "He lost his coat and his temper" (<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/syllipsis>).

While there is an infinite number of details pertaining to the production process that could potentially be included in the production-related unit of the wine reviews, 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 descriptive-evaluative unit. Table 5:1 has already made it clear that the most frequently mentioned factors are the person responsible for the production of the wine, i.e. the producer or consultant oenologist (55<sup>84</sup> occurrences in the 200 texts), and the composition of different grape types that the wine was made from (52 occurrences in the 200 texts). 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 (5:5) exemplifies this phenomenon in Parker's texts:

(5:5) 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 (5:5) above, for instance, Alain Vauthier is reported to have been *taming the extraordinary potential of this noble terroir*. Examples (5:6)–(5:9) below provide further illustrations of this phenomenon:

(5:6) This is a 100% Merlot cuvee fashioned by Christian Moueix from an 8-acre vineyard *he culled out* from his flagship property...

(5:7) 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...

(5:8) Young Stephan Chabord *is trying singlehandedly to resurrect the image* for sparkling wines from St.-Peray.

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<sup>84</sup> In addition to these 55 instances where the producer or oenologist is referred either by name or in terms of professional function, the data set includes another 7 instances, where the expression *estate* functions more or less clearly as a metonymy to designate the conscious human being(s) that are in charge of the operation.

(5:9) Andre Brunel, who *has made a nearly complete recovery from a terrible fall from the top of a foudre*, has made a gorgeous 2004 Chateau-neuf du Pape.

The characters portrayed in these examples give the impression of being hard-working individuals, dedicated to the task of making the best wine possible, an effect which is emphasized by the use of material processes with strongly instigating agents in (5:6)–(5:8). Example (5:9), which superficially may seem only marginally relevant with respect to the tasting experience, nevertheless contributes to the representation of Brunel as an individual who is so dedicated to making the best possible wine at his estate that he does not hesitate to sacrifice his physical health while personally overseeing the production process. This could be contrasted with the following example taken from a tasting note written by one of Parker's former collaborators:

(5:10) In honor of his departed wife, Camarda *has changed the label* of the floral, dark berry-scented 2003 Sorella; it is now adorned with a painting of Annie.

Even though this characterization may serve the purpose of inducing the audience's sympathy for the proprietor, it does not to the same extent draw attention to his minute dedication to wine making. This contrastive example therefore highlights what is a salient feature in the construction of the credibility of the product in Parker's wine writing. It is also worth taking note of the use of the present progressive in several of these occurrences, which has the function of conceptualizing the producers' hard work as an ongoing activity that is not delimited to the production of the particular wine that is being reviewed (see (5:7) and (5:8) above).

All these aspects contribute to the construction of these characters as heroes in Parker's texts. In this respect, the instances of portrayals of wine makers and producers in my randomly collected corpus can be said to support comments about Parker's writing made in other sources. According to McCoy (2005:188–189), Parker's writing involves a strong emphasis on the man-made aspect of wine-making, imposing a celebrity system in which certain individuals are promoted to stardom. This runs counter to the French tradition, according to which the vineyard (its location, soil, prior reputation, longstanding history of wine making etc.) has been promoted as the prime factor for the quality of a wine. 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'.

In addition to the occurrences of material processes with instigating agents that are introduced by means of their proper names, the production-related unit

involves occurrences of material processes which are rendered in the passive, in which the agent is not always overtly realized but always presupposed, which is illustrated in (5:11) below:

(5:11) *Cropped at 15 hectoliters per hectare, both its alcoholic and malolactic fermentations take place in small barrels (an unusual as well as labor intensive technique), and the wine is aged on its lees before being bottled unfiltered.*

In addition to the initial elliptic construction, *cropped at*, as well as the passive constructions, *is aged* and *being bottled unfiltered*, in which the by-phrases have been excluded, additional material processes could be revealed in this example by means of ‘unpacking’ of expressions such as *take place* and *labor intensive technique*, so as to expose elided agents, which are concealed by the sentence construction. Thompson (2003:258) proposes the notion of Clause participants, which are represented in the text’s surface form, and World participants, a notion that refers to the participants that took part in the real world event that the text portrays. As observed by Thompson (2003:276), although the idea of ideational metaphor (see section 3.2.1) may be intuitively clear, it can nevertheless be a fuzzy analytical notion, a phenomenon that will be further discussed below. In the exploratory outline provided in chapter 5, the discussion of transitivity is delimited to Clause participants. I will however come back to the idea of textual ellipsis and the possibility to reveal World participants in the close interpretive analyses of selected texts that are presented in chapters 6 and 7.

As shown in table 5:1, the second most frequent type of information provided in the production-related units concerns 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 proportion of different grape types included in the blend. Moreover, the enumeration of grape types or of other technical details pertaining to the production process simultaneously also emphasizes the fact that the resulting wine depends on choices made by a conscious human being. In France, strict regulations determine which grape types can be grown in the different wine regions.<sup>85</sup> Saying that a wine comes from for instance the Pomerol district also entails that it is based almost entirely on the Merlot grape, just as referring to a wine as a St Émilion implies that it is made from a combination of Merlot and Cabernet Franc. The point I want to make is that while the mentioning of the particular

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<sup>85</sup> As already mentioned in section 4.2, in Bordeaux, for instance, for reasons of climate, the left-bank wine estates are dominated by Cabernet Sauvignon, while the right-bank estates make Merlot-based wines. In Rhône, the most important grapes are Syrah and Grenache, while in Bourgogne, red wines are almost exclusively based on Pinot noir.

wine district emphasizes the location where the grapes have grown and backgrounds the grape varieties, the presentation of the exact percentages of grape varieties, as illustrated in (5:12) below, instead enforces a conceptualization of the wine as made up of these component parts, thereby simultaneously weakening the construction of the wine's place of origin:<sup>86</sup>

(5:12) ...this tiny garagiste operation has fashioned a provocative blend of *80% Merlot and 20% Cabernet Franc* with 13+% alcohol.

In addition to the producer/consultant oenologist and the composition of grape varieties, which are by far the most frequently mentioned production-related details in the data, it is worth observing that aspects related to the vineyard, such as its location, soil or official ranking, are also brought up relatively frequently in the data set reviews (27 occurrences in the 200 texts). The importance of this phenomenon will be further explored in chapters 6 and 7.

It has been pointed out above that the technical details given about the wine in the production-related unit can be seen as temporally located prior to the tasting event, since pertaining to how the wine was achieved during the production process. In addition to referring to events that took place in the past with respect to the actual tasting of the wine, it is also worth taking note of the fact that the space frame is local rather than universal, i.e. the events that are invoked by the text are staged in the location where the wine is produced. In terms of time and space, the production-related unit can be seen as the texts' 'then' and 'there'.

Another distinguishing characteristic of the production-related unit is that the exact renderings that are provided cannot be understood to be arrived at through sensory perception during the tasting event. While studies on wine recognition (see section 2.1) have revealed that wine experts tend to base their identification of wines on grape variety, it is rather unlikely 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, which example (5:13) illustrates:

(5:13) *Belle-Vue is a blend of 52% Cabernet Sauvignon, 30% Merlot, 15% Petit Verdot, and 3% Carmenere.*

We can thus draw the conclusion that this information is not derived from sensory perception during the tasting event. Furthermore, based on our general world knowledge, it is rather unlikely that Parker himself has participated in the production of the wines and therefore has access to first-hand information about the grapes that were included in the blend. The source of evidence must

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<sup>86</sup> The name of the district (appellation) where the wine-producing estate is located is nonetheless always included in the heading, which was discussed in section 5.3.1 above.

instead be external to the writer himself. Although this is not overtly mentioned, a commonsensical interpretation is that the information included in the production-related unit has been provided by the estate whose wine is being reviewed and/or accessed through other external sources. A few of the corpus texts provide cues to this effect, which is illustrated in (5:14) below, where the source of information is mentioned explicitly:

(5:14) ...13% alcohol (*according to the proprietor, Madame Denise Gasqueton*).

In terms of Cornillie's three categories of modes of knowing (see section 3.2.1), the type of evidence underlying the production-related text section 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, see section 3.2.1) reliability hierarchy, the kinds of evidence on which the production-related unit is based can nonetheless be understood to be incontestable, generally available facts that can be verified by a sceptical reader. The production-related text component can therefore be said to invite collaboration with the intended audience in the sense that it construes the prospective readers as a reasonable group, requiring verifiable evidence in order to be convinced.

### 5.3.3 DESCRIPTIVE-EVALUATIVE UNIT

I now proceed to consider the thematic unit labelled descriptive-evaluative, which generally follows the production-related unit in the texts' surface form. It is worth repeating that the descriptive-evaluative unit can be seen as central in view of the fact that while the production-related and consumption-oriented units are not always instantiated, at least one slot of the descriptive-evaluative unit is instantiated in all of the 200 data set reviews. (5:15) below provides an illustration of the realization of the descriptive-evaluative unit in the data set reviews:

(5:15) 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 descriptive-evaluative unit involves representation of 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*, 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 2.1), 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 register of the wine tasting note (see section 2.2).

However, although all the stages of the wine tasting procedure are referenced in this particular instance, the content analysis presented in section 5.2 has made it clear that this is not the case in all of the data set reviews: The overview of the thematic content shows that the wine's palate (taste and mouth-feel) is the sensory impression most frequently mentioned. References to the wine's gustatory impression appear in 192 of the 200 texts. Occurring at a similar rate, instances where the wines' aromatics are brought up in the texts have been found in 180 of the data set reviews. It should be made clear that it is not always completely clear whether an expression refers specifically to the gustatory impression or exclusively to the olfactory impression or draws on a combination of these senses, which is why the numbers provided in table 5:1 need to be treated with certain caution. It is however quite evident that references to the visual impression of the wine are less frequent: only about half of the descriptive-evaluative units (104/200) 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 descriptive-evaluative unit, descriptions of the wine's appearance only occur together with one or both of the other descriptive-evaluative components. Furthermore, as illustrated by example (5:15), in the majority of the renderings of the wines' visual characteristics, it is a deep, saturated colour that is depicted by the text. Only two of the texts involve descriptions of light-coloured wines: *light ruby/garnet-colored 2003* and *a healthy medium ruby*.<sup>87</sup> This phenomenon will be further investigated below in the analyses performed in chapters 6 and 7.

In terms of time and spatial location, the descriptive-evaluative unit is taken to represent the texts' 'here' and 'now'. An exploration of the data set 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:

(5:16) 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 phe-

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<sup>87</sup> It is noteworthy that the two wines that have been characterized by means of these colour descriptions have received only moderate appreciation, which is made clear by the numerical rankings, 89 and 86 points, respectively.



nomenon 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, I take the use of the present tense in the descriptive-evaluative units of Parker’s reviews 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 (see section 2.2), and an element that is frequently elided in the portrayal of the tasting event is in fact the finite verb, which is illustrated in Thibault’s example (see section 2.2). As a result, renderings of the tasting event are often untensed. The following example, which is taken from the British wine magazine *Decanter*, provides another illustration of this phenomenon:

(5:17) Dark ruby. Deep. Precise notes of fruit and spice. Complex and inviting. Dried plum character and a nutty, savoury palate.

Just like the descriptive-evaluative unit that was reproduced in (5:15) above, the tasting note 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 nonetheless makes this text different from the descriptive-evaluative unit that was presented in (5:15).

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 model 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 & Parradis 2010a, Hommerberg & Paradis 2010b). The generality effect of the simple present can be illustrated by rephrasing the example above in the present progressive:

(5:16a) 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, I 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 tasting notes from other sources, Parker's texts are always tensed, and in the vast majority of the descriptive-evaluative units in the data set reviews (197/200), it is the simple present tense that is used. My scrutiny of the data set reveals only one occurrence of the past tense, which is represented below:<sup>88</sup>

(5:18) ...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 di-

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<sup>88</sup> In the remaining two occurrences, there is one instance where the description-evaluation of the wine is grammatically linked to the verb in the production-related unit. In the other, the description of the tasting event is linked by means of a zeugmatic construction to the finite verb of the consumption-oriented unit.

rectly 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 the descriptive-evaluative unit of 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 (5:19) and (5:20) illustrate:

(5:19) There is not much to get excited about here. The 2003 Côtes du Rhône Villages *was* clipped and shallow.

(5:20) The 2004 Crozes-Hermitages *was* of average quality with high acidity, vegetal personality, and little texture or concentration.

I have already mentioned that the vast majority of the presentations in the descriptive-evaluative unit of the 200 data set texts include one or more finite verbs in the simple present tense. In terms of the SFL system of transitivity, the simple present is typical of mental (Halliday & Mathiessen 2004:197) as well as relational processes (Halliday & Mathiessen 2004:226). Although some of these instances fit perfectly into Halliday's category of relational process, the SFL system of transitivity is less appropriate for others. The most frequently used verb is *be* (75 occurrences of *is*, 1 occurrence of *are*), which is also the archetype of relational process. *Have* (3 occurrences of *has*) as well as *possess* (22 occurrences of *possesses*, 1 occurrence of *possess*) can also be seen as core members of the category of relational processes. Examples (5:21) and (5:22) below illustrate these occurrences of typical relational processes in the data set under investigation:

(5:21) The surprisingly big, exuberant 2003, while not yet graceful, *is* very expressive.

(5:22) 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...

However, more than half of the instances are made up of processes which cannot as easily be captured by means of the proposed SFL categories of transitivity. These occurrences, while displaying features that are typical of relational processes, e.g. the simple present tense, also approach material processes in

that they involve a more active participant than core members of the category of relational processes. In addition, instances that ostensibly appear to be verbal processes are also found in the descriptive-evaluative units in the data set. Examples (5:23)–(5:26) illustrate the instances where the wine performs a more or less personified participant role:

(5:23) It *exhibits* a dense purple color as well as a big, sweet nose of scorched earth, blackberries, underbrush, cherries, and smoke.

(5:24) ...this wine *offers* sweet cherry and currant fruit

(5:25) ...it *reveals* good weight and ripeness as well as plenty of earthy, black cherry, and spice characteristics.

(5:26) ...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.

Examples (5:23)–(5:26) are presented in descending order of frequency, i.e. *exhibit* (33 occurrences), *offer* (22), *reveal* (19) and *boast* (9). It should be pointed out that only finite verbs have been taken into consideration in this discussion of process types. In addition, there are also numerous occurrences of the same process types occurring in non-finite constructions. (5:27) provides an illustration of this phenomenon:

(5:27) The deep ruby/purple-tinged 2003 reveals an evolved, precocious bouquet *displaying* this cuvee's tell-tale minerality...

Furthermore, as observed by Caballero (2007), motion verbs where attributes of the wine are portrayed as actively performing some type of motion are also used, the most frequent of which are exemplified in (5:28) and (5:29):

(5:28) 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.

(5:29) Deep, sweet black currant fruit interwoven with smoky herb, graphite, and licorice aromas *emerge* from this delicious, supple, fleshy 2003.

In the data set, *jump* is found to occur 8 times and *emerge* 6 times.<sup>89</sup> It is clear that the processes occurring in Parker's texts are not always typical relational processes. Instead, metaphorical extensions of material and verbal processes allow the wine to be presented as a more or less active participant in the wine tasting event, i.e. the Phenomenon is represented as the dynamic entity. The analytical problem of categorizing such instances has previously been discussed by Thompson (2003:260). From the perspective of the SFL system of transitivity, this way of representing reality could perhaps be interpreted as a form of 'grammatical metaphor', or more exactly 'ideational metaphor', which is used by the writer to replace a more 'congruent' expression where the human World participant, the Sensor/Perceiver, is realized. However, Thompson (2004:236–237) cautions against over-interpretation of the notion of grammatical metaphor, suggesting that it is problematic to draw a distinct line between "unpacking of meanings that are there to importing meanings that were not there before". In order to enhance understanding of the texts so as to shed light on the present research questions, it is nevertheless desirable to somehow go beyond the surface form of the texts and arrive at an interpretation of their potential core meaning. This enterprise will be undertaken in chapter 6, where the analytical tools of argumentation theory are employed to assist the investigation.

Viberg (2001:1295), who has studied perception verbs specifically, distinguishes between three 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, (5:30) below could perhaps be taken to illustrate the Experiencer-based type, although the Experiencer has been omitted.<sup>90</sup>

(5:30) 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 data set, 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...* In terms of the SFL system of transitivity (Thompson 2004:92–93), these occurrences could be

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<sup>89</sup> In addition to the processes that have been brought up in the discussion, 23 passive constructions of the type *x is accompanied/followed by y* are found along with a few verbs that are less frequent, for instance *display, show, soar, ooze, cascade*.

<sup>90</sup> Viberg's (2001) study is however delimited to perception verbs proper, i.e. *see, hear, feel, taste* and *smell*.

regarded as material processes where the Actor (the wine taster) has been left implicit and only the Goal (the taste impression) is realized. In view of the fact that what is dealt with is perception, they could also be seen as a type of mental process, where the implicit human participant has the role of Sensor and the qualities in the wine that triggered the taste perception are encoded as Phenomenon.<sup>91</sup> As mentioned above, it should be made clear that the type of process that allows for the reconstruction of a conscious human participant is very infrequent in the material, occurring in only 1% of the instances. It can therefore be said to be atypical of Parker's writing.

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. Except for the two occurrences of Experiencer-based perception verbs exemplified by (5:30) above, it is a characteristic feature of Parker's texts that the tasting event is construed as a phenomenon that takes 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" (see also e.g. Fairclough 1995 and van Leeuwen 1993, which are addressed in section 3.2.1).

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 found in this thematic unit are depiction of the impressions that the wine has made on his senses of vision, smell, taste and mouthfeel. If we compare the evidence provided in this thematic unit to the data occurring in the production-related unit, 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 production-related unit 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

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<sup>91</sup> Thompson (2004:237) discusses the problem of categorizing this type of processes, where a material process is extended in meaning to designate a mental process.

specifications, the presentations delivered in the descriptive-evaluative unit are less determinate. For the visual impression, we find the following type of renderings:

(5:31) *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 as a colour descriptor 16 times in the data set, 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 the descriptive-evaluative units of the texts 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.<sup>92</sup> 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 exact renderings are however avoided in the descriptive-evaluative units of Parker's texts, which suggests 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 data set portrayals of the wines' smell. This is consistent with the stipulation of The Aroma Wheel (see figure 2:2), which is believed to constitute an objective tool for the description of a wine's aroma and bouquet. In the majority of the data set reviews that include what I have taken to be 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 which are reminiscent of the ones provided by The Aroma Wheel:

(5:32) *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 con-

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<sup>92</sup> See for instance [http://incedo.se/NCS/NCS\\_3.html](http://incedo.se/NCS/NCS_3.html). Date of access 14 May 2010.

ceivably not the visual characteristics of these objects that are being drawn on but instead another property, namely their smell. Since it is a specific selection of these objects' properties that is transferred to the description of the wine's olfactory characteristics, I take the transference of meaning in these instances to build on a relationship of metonymy rather than comparison/association involving the source domain of wine and the target domain of the physical object. Paradis (2009a) argues the metonymization and metaphorization are not mutually exclusive, but can instead be seen as two different types of meaning construals which make different contributions to the presentation, metaphorization always presupposing metonymization. Although this study does not propose to make a theoretical contribution to the study of figurative language, it is nonetheless relevant to note the relationship between metonymy and metaphor for the subsequent analyses undertaken below.

An investigation of the more than 150 occurrences of such lists of olfactory components found in the data set shows that none of the lists are exactly identical, but made up of different descriptors that are given in different orders. This phenomenon contributes to the idea that these lists are not random collections of descriptors but indeed factual renderings based on the perceptions of chemical reactions in the wines, i.e. the dissipation time of different types of molecules in the wines that are being described. This idea is substantiated by evidence from chemistry (see section 2.2). 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 descriptive-evaluative unit. This feature of the presentation suggests a human sensory experience 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.

Being able to perceive the diversity and ordering of different olfactory components is of course a sign of an expert nose, and this feature of Parker's writing, although it has been ridiculed by some of his critics (see e.g. McCoy 2005 and Johnson 2005), can nonetheless be seen to contribute to the idea that the author has indeed extensive practical wisdom in the field that his writing targets.<sup>93</sup> Steinberger (2007a) captures the audience's potential reaction to such descriptions as follows: "Gee, he really must be gifted if he can smell all those things – I should heed his recommendations".

Although readers may marvel at Parker's capacity to provide extensive lists of smell descriptors, it has not been verified that these are intersubjectively dependable. Several informal experiments carried out by winemaker Chapoutier show that subjects are not able to identify wines on the basis of the descriptions

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<sup>93</sup> According to Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1378a), practical wisdom is one of the aspects that contribute to making up an effective ethos, the other two being virtue and good will.



provided by Parker (see section 1.1). Furthermore, the experiments involving professional wine tasters carried out by Morrot et al. (2001) demonstrate that the sense of smell is overruled by, and can therefore easily be deceived by, the sense of vision, in which case the property that the descriptors have in common with the wine is not related to aroma components but instead to the colour shade of the wine. It should be pointed out that the aromatics of wine are not static but change over time as the wine matures, and the same wine may therefore display different aromatics on different tasting occasions, which is illustrated by the following depiction of the same wine's (Château Angelus 2003) aroma components in three different issues of *The Wine Advocate*:

(5:33) ...a stunning perfume of *flowers, red and black fruits, lead pencil shavings, smoke, and roasted coffee*... (April 2004)

(5:34) ...gorgeous aromas of *boysenberries, charcoal, sweet, leathery/meaty notes, and hints of truffles*... (April 2005)

(5:35) ...a perfumed nose of *rose petals, blackberries, menthol, and cedar*... (April 2006)

In the vast majority of the data set texts, the thematic disposition 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 2:1, 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. Since it is often difficult to determine which of these gustatory dimensions are being addressed by the linguistic items used in the depictions of the tasting event, I will however refrain from making such fine-grained distinctions.

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. (5:36) and (5:37) below provide illustrations of this feature of the gustatory descriptions in the data set:

(5:36) *Deep, full-flavored, muscular, textured, and rich with light to moderate tannin in the finish, this lavishly rich, full-bodied effort*...

(5:37) ... 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) (see section 2.2). 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.

I have already indicated that the data set reviews lack references to recommended food. Although all the wines that are reviewed in the 200 texts are specified in the heading as belonging to the category of "Table wines", the depiction of the wines' gustatory dimensions seem to rely on an implicit system of absolute norms that are independent of any type of meal that the wines may be consumed with. This is noteworthy, especially in view of Deroy's (2007:112–113) observation that the experience of a wine's taste is very different depending on the type of food that the wine is combined with (see section 2.1). Johnson (2005:42) makes the following critical comment about this aspect of Parker's writing:

The weakness of any such system is that it is based on tasting, rather than drinking. I can't remember which wine-maker said 'I make my wine to be drunk with food, not with other wines,' but the problem goes to the heart of all test bench judgements. To everyday wine-lovers (and I am one of them) context is ... well, perhaps not everything, but at least half of the pleasure – and hence of my judgement. Who is to say how a wine tasted, as it were, only in combat with other wines, will perform solo at table? The more categorical the judgement, the deeper the trap.

McCoy (2005:265) refers to the type of wines that are designed to drink by themselves as "social wines" and argues that such social wines do not complement food as appropriately as leaner, or more acidic wines, which contribute to a healthy digestion. According to McCoy (2005:216), Parker sees himself as a rebel against what he refers to as the "food-wine period", an era which he dispatches to the past, but which other critics still hold on to, describing as 'elegant' wines that in Parker's view are too acidic, diluted and thin, and that lack sufficient texture and character.

Throughout this outline of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the data set reviews I have indicated that the evidence underlying the presentations is based on the writer's sensory experience, a feature that distinguishes this thematic unit from the production-related unit where the evidence is taken to be pro-

vided 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 (see section 3.2.1). 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 therefore regarded as less reliable sources of evidence, since they are not intersubjectively invariant.<sup>94</sup>

In the case of the sensorial evidence underlying the descriptive-evaluative units of Parker's texts, 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, see also section 1.1). Based on Parker's media image or situated ethos, 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.

#### 5.3.4 CONSUMPTION-ORIENTED UNIT

I will now consider the last thematic unit of the tasting notes, namely the unit devoted to the future consumption of the wine. Caballero's (2007) schema suggests that the thematic unit devoted to issuing predictions 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. As clarified by table 5:1 (see section 5.2), while none of the reviews include any mentioning whatsoever of the type of food that will combine well with the wines, occasional reviews include a reference to the prospective consumer. Instead of being positioned together with the consumption span, this reference may initiate the whole of the review so that it appears in initial position in the text's surface form, before the production-related unit. This structure is exemplified in (5:38) below:

(5:38) *A perennial value pick for smart consumers*, Cap de Faugeres is fashioned by world-renowned oenologist, Michel Rolland...

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<sup>94</sup> Paradis (2010) discusses the reliability hierarchy of evidentiality in the light of data from *The Wine Advocate*. She observes that smells are verbalized by means of terms denoting objects which have visible properties, i.e. a form of synaesthetic metonymization.

This presentation can perhaps be understood to invoke a group of prospective consumers that are more concerned with the price-quality relation than with spending too much money on more well-known and prestigious wines that are over-priced. The formulation can therefore be said to entail explicit inclusion of readers who are individualistic enough to disregard the wines' established reputation in the French wine world in terms of official ranking. Simultaneously, it can be seen to implicitly exclude readers who prefer to pay a little more for a wine whose status is officially established, a group that cannot be understood to be addressed by the epithet *smart* in the present context. Similarly, example (5:39) below illustrate the explicit and implicit inclusion and exclusion of other groups of consumers:

(5:39) This superb effort should only be purchased by *patient connoisseurs*.

In (5:39), the epithet *patient connoisseurs* entails explicit inclusion of those that are initiated in the field and will not have the bad taste of quaffing this wine immediately before it has achieved maturity, while simultaneously implicitly excluding another group with the opposite disposition, namely those consumers who are often referred to as 'hedonists' by Parker. Although there are no occurrences in the data set where this group is explicitly addressed with expressions such as 'hedonistic consumers', implicit inclusion of this group is nonetheless indicated by the following type of expression:

(5:40) This luscious, medium-bodied Certan-Marzelle provides *a totally hedonistic turn-on*.

These occurrences are not included among the instances listed in table 5:1. It should however be made clear that only a handful of the data set reviews include any mentioning of the prospective consumers.

In addition to the slots included in Caballero's (2007) organization schema (see section 2.2) that are relatable to the consumption-oriented unit, 48 tasting notes make reference to the American importer, a phenomenon which can perhaps be seen to emphasize the function of the tasting notes as giving consumption advice rather than providing aesthetic critique (see section 2.3). It should be acknowledged that only four of the 150 Bordeaux reviews mention an American importer, while 44 of the 50 Rhône reviews include such a reference, a discrepancy for which I will not attempt to provide an explanation. In its unmarked form, the consumption-oriented unit only includes a reference regarding the wine's recommended consumption span, a specification that is provided in 90% of the 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 dur-

ing this period, an idea which is supported by the fact that negatively oriented reviews are not endowed with a drink time specification.

According to Paradis (2009a, 2009b), who has carried out an investigation of the linguistic encoding of drink time recommendations in *The Wine Advocate*, the information in this part of the tasting notes 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 tasting notes 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 tasting notes selected for the investigation.<sup>95</sup> This can be compared to my data set, where 61% (111/181) of the instances of drink time specifications are declaratives, while 22% (39/181) are delivered as imperatives and 17% (31/181) are presented in the form of noun phrases. The imperatives as well as the noun phrase constructions are illustrated in (5:41) and (5:42) below:

(5:41) Drink it over the next decade.

(5:42) Anticipated maturity: 2013-2026

Paradis (2009a) provides further subcategorization of declarative constructions among the 200 drink time recommendations collected from *The Wine Advocate*, which shows that 28% of the declaratives are middle constructions, 32% are passive constructions and 40% is made up of other types of simple declaratives. These three categories are illustrated by means of examples (5:43)–(5:45), which are taken from the material that is currently under study.

(5:43) It should drink well for 5-6 years.

(5:44) ...it can be enjoyed over the next 10-15 years.

(5:45) It is [...] capable of lasting 15-20 years.

Although my data reveals a slightly higher percentage figure for noun phrases, the proportions are nonetheless relatively stable. Paradis (2009a), who concentrates specifically on the occurrences in the data of middle constructions (see (5:43) above), 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

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<sup>95</sup> Paradis (2009a, 2009b) builds on data randomly selected from issues of *The Wine Advocate* ranging from 1995–2005. This means that neither the author nor the date of publication has been taken into consideration in the construction of the corpus, which may explain the slightly different results displayed by my data set.

than the speaker himself. In a similar vein, based on ideas from SFL, 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 ‘offers’ are strongly associated with modality. In accordance with these ideas, it is worth noting that the imperatives are different from the other types of constructions occurring in the consumption-oriented units, 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 (5:41a) below:

(5:41a) 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 (5:42) have no mood structure, and consequently do not enable the addition of tag questions or recipient responses. The declaratives in examples (5:43)–(5:45), however, can be tested by highlighting the Mood of the clauses in the following way:

(5:45a) It is [...] capable of lasting 15-20 years, *isn’t it?* (Or alternatively: *Yes, it is/No, it isn’t*)

The rhetorical potentiality of the linguistic encoding of the drink time recommendations will be further explored below in the interpretive analyses presented in chapters 6 and 7.

In terms of Halliday’s categories of transitivity, while occurrences such as (5:43) can be seen as instances of material processes, they do not quite fit into this category due to the fact that the process is of the relational type since highlighting 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 is intended to highlight 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 consumption-oriented unit from the production-related and descriptive-evaluative units 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 modality or 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 it is linguistically encoded in various ways in the data set. In addition to verbs expressing epistemic modality, like *should* and *can* (see for instance (5:43) and (5:44)), the consumption-oriented unit of the data set texts 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 (5:43)–(5:45). Further examples of such linguistically encoded restrictions in epistemic certainty are provided by (5:42), where the item *anticipated* emphasizes the uncertainty of the future, and (5:45), 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 was observed above to be the case with the production-related as well as the descriptive-evaluative unit, the majority of the consumption-oriented units in the data set lack overt markers of evidentiality. However, zeugmatic constructions are frequently employed, which connect the consumption-oriented unit with the preceding descriptive-evaluative unit, a phenomenon that is illustrated in (5:46) below:

(5:46) Long, rich, and moderately tannic with surprising weight, it should drink beautifully for 7-8 years...

In (5:46), 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 zeugmatic 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 gustatory perception of the wine and the wine's consumption span is weakened:

(5:46a) Bolaire 2005 is long, rich and moderately tannic with surprising weight. This wine should drink beautifully for 7-8 years...

However, according to Deroy (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 readers, they need to rely on the speaker 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 (5:43)–(5:46) indicating that the prediction relies on inference-based knowing, evidential markers indicating inference from previous experiences can be found in the consumption-oriented units of other data set reviews, which the following example illustrates:

(5:47) *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. Parker’s critics have however expressed scepticism with respect to his alleged capabilities.

The very fact that the texts involve predictions of the future entails an authority aspect, according to Fairclough (2003:167), who associates the issuing of predictions with socially ratified power. Speakers who make predictions about the future simultaneously identify themselves as having the right to exercise this power. Fairclough mentions a number of groups that are in possession of the power to make predictions, namely politicians, management gurus and priests. To this list we might add gurus of consumption.

## **5.4 SUMMARY AND POINTS OF DEPARTURE**

This chapter has presented an exploratory analysis of representations in the data selected for the current investigation, the goal being to arrive at an understanding of what is characteristic of the material as a whole. Section 5.1 provided a presentation of the representational frame which surrounds Parker’s reviews, assisted by the tools developed by Kress & van Leeuwen (2006). The analysis



demonstrated that the visual resources employed on *The Wine Advocate* webpage contribute to the construction of Parker as a sincere, authoritative and zealous critic seeking direct contact with his audience, but also as an ordinary man in a social relationship of equality with respect to his audience. In addition, the quotations that are cited on the website as well as the information about the extensive international readership of Parker's reviews contribute to invoking the world view that what is desired by numerous people is better than that which is only desired by a few. Section 5.2 gave an overview of the content of the 200 wine reviews from 2006 which constitute the prime target of this study, displaying the distribution of different types of information in the data. The content analysis was subsequently taken as point of departure for a division of the reviews into thematic units, which constitutes the core of the chapter. The discussion through-out section 5.3 attempted to relate textual observations to the discursive and socio-cultural practice, incorporating available contextual understanding as well as general world knowledge. In order to sum up the most important insights of the thematic analysis, subsections 5.4.1 through 5.4.3 are designed to recapitulate a number of important concepts and ideas related to the representational persuasiveness of these texts that were brought up in the discussion.

#### 5.4.1 TIME AND SPACE

In the analysis of thematic units, it was proposed that the production-related unit, which normally initiates the surface form of the tasting notes, deals chiefly with events that took place in the past with respect to the speech event. 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-related unit. A variety of different representational strategies are found in this thematic unit, 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 event, i.e. the texts' here and now.

Normally following the production-related unit in the texts' surface form, the descriptive-evaluative unit represents the texts' here and now. In an overwhelming majority of the data set texts, a present tense verb serves the purpose of temporally locating the presentation of the perceptual event. 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 de-

scribed 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 an estimation of the wine's ideal consumption time, a part of the texts that has been referred to as the consumption-oriented unit. This thematic unit is temporally anchored in the future, a phenomenon that 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.

#### 5.4.2 EVIDENTIALITY

The division of the data set reviews into thematic units also involved a discussion of the different types of evidence underlying the representation. A distinction was made between the mode of knowing and the source of evidence. It was established that the information presented in the production-related unit, which often involves detailed technical facts, 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 that characterizes the production-related thematic unit is therefore hearsay. While this phenomenon is only rarely realized by means of overt markers in the texts' surface form, it can nevertheless be inferred on the basis of general knowledge about how the world functions.

In terms of evidentiality, the thematic unit devoted to description-evaluation of the perceptual experience is clearly distinct from the production-related unit. Based on contextual understanding as well as occasional meta-comments referring to the activity of tasting the wine, it must be 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. There are no 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 provided in the descriptive-evaluative unit is based. The credibility of the sensory evidence is underscored by the widespread tales of Parker's extraordinary sensory capabilities.

Finally, the thematic unit devoted to the wine's ideal consumption time has been found to rely on the mode of knowing of expectation. 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. Based on contextual understanding, the assump-

tion 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.

It should be observed that the notion of evidentiality has been widely studied, but that no attempt is made here to cover the extensive theoretical literature on the subject. Theoretical ideas are incorporated into this study only insofar as they are useful with respect to the understanding of the topic of investigation.

### 5.4.3 TRANSITIVITY

Throughout the survey of thematic units that has been presented in this chapter, an attempt has been made to apply the Hallidayan model of transitivity. It should be made clear that the analysis does not aspire to give a complete picture of the process types and participants involved in all the texts. Instead, the goal has been to try to reveal transitivity patterns that are typical of the material as a whole. The production-related unit 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 process featuring in the descriptive-evaluative unit. This strategy allows the presentation to be highly condensed, leaving implicit the production process as well as the participants. ‘Unpacking’ of all the instances of such embedded processes has however not been undertaken in this analytic overview of the whole material. Where the process is realized in the form of a finite verb, the process type that stands out as representative for the production-related unit is material processes with strongly instigating agents, i.e. core members of the category of material processes.

Furthermore, the examination of the descriptive-evaluative unit displays that the most frequently instantiated process type is relational processes. In addition to core members of the category of relational processes, where the wine has the participant role of theme, metaphorical expressions are found, where the wine or components of the wine perform a more or less personified role as agent in what could perhaps be regarded as peripheral members of the category of material clauses or border-line instances between material and relational processes. This rather rough analysis of the descriptive-evaluative units in Parker’s wine reviews reveals that the process types are not easily categorized on the basis of the SFL model of transitivity, which in itself can be seen as an interesting result that requires further scrutiny.

The problem of categorizing the processes by means of the tools for transitivity analysis provided by SFL, which was encountered in the examination of the descriptive-evaluative unit, was found to recur in the investigation of the consumption-oriented unit. Although the action that is being invoked involves the future consumer of the wine, human participants are not present in the portrayal of this event. In both the descriptive-evaluative and consumption-oriented units, the action is transferred from the human participant, the wine

taster and future consumer respectively, to the Goal, i.e. the wine, which is portrayed as performing a more or less active role in the tasting event as well as in the future consumption event. The processes are thereby deagentialized. The notion of ‘grammatical metaphor’, or more specifically ‘ideational metaphor’, was brought into the discussion. The idea that it is possible to distinguish between congruent and metaphorical occurrences in the present material was however found analytically problematic. In order to arrive at a plausible reconstruction of the texts’ potential meaning content, involving World participants (Thompson 2003), I have therefore preferred to employ a different set of analytical tools, namely the reconstruction principles provided by argumentation theory, which were presented in section 3.2.2.

#### 5.4.4 POINTS OF DEPARTURE

The exploratory exposition offered in this chapter has involved constant movement between the different dimensions of the communicative event under study, incorporating facets of socio-cultural as well as discourse practice into the analysis of the textual material, which is the only aspect of the present topic that has been directly accessible for investigation. The examination continuously strived to capture both explicit and implicit features that are characteristic of Parker’s writing. In addition to providing clues with respect to the research questions, the examination conducted in this chapter aimed to present a precursory overview of the material under study, thereby providing an important backdrop for the investigations undertaken in subsequent analysis chapters. Methodologically, the presentation in chapter 5 will function to support the following investigations, which purport to approach the material using the analytical tools provided by argumentation theory and Appraisal theory. The account of persuasiveness in representations given in the present chapter is thereby taken to constitute a basis for interpretations as well as categorizations.

## 6 PERSUASIVENESS IN ARGUMENTATION

The preceding chapter has offered an exploratory overview of patterns of representations elucidated from the collection of 200 reviews as well as available information about the context in which the texts are staged. Parker's tasting notes were thereby divided into thematic units on the basis of time and space frames as well as mode of knowing and source from which the evidence emanates. The discussion revealed that a characteristic feature of the short texts that make up the observable material of the current study is that these aspects are elided rather than stated explicitly. This means that the texts involve a great deal of taken-for-grantedness. By means of transitivity analysis, an attempt was made to show how the texts represent reality in terms of processes and participants. However, I found it unhelpful to employ the system of transitivity to demonstrate how reality could have been represented but is not. The SFL notion of 'ideational metaphor' was brought into the discussion. Although intuitively sensible, the distinction between 'congruent' and 'metaphorical' was found analytically problematic, which agrees with Thompson's (2003) observations.

This chapter proposes a different way to explore the texts, which allows a closer look at the implicit ideas, assumptions and values that are embedded in the short textual messages that are available for the current analysis. Relying on the results from the previous chapter as a background and a reference point for interpretation, this chapter sets out to highlight the argumentative dimension of Parker's writing. The intention is to arrive at an understanding of how Parker's argumentation is structured so as to contribute to persuasiveness. The insights of argumentation theory, which was introduced in section 3.2.2, are resorted to as a method that allows deciphering of the textual form so that a plausible argumentation structure as well as underlying topoi and argument schemes can be abstracted. The idea is that an analysis of the argumentative organization of these texts will provide increased knowledge as to how the texts are built up in terms of arguments that are put forward in support of the recommendations as well as the kinds of evidence, assumptions and values on which the arguments

are based. It is important to emphasize that the reconstructions arrived at by means of the transformation operations are plausible abstractions. They represent thought constructs that emanate from my interpretation of the text, which is the only aspect of the present communicative event that has been available for this investigation. In accordance with the methodology adopted in the current study, the reconstructions have been discussed with several other analysts in order to ensure intersubjective acceptability.<sup>96</sup> It should however be made clear that the abstractions do not pretend to embody verifiable real world thought processes.

The present chapter is structured as follows. Section 6.1 presents a schematic argumentative structure, proposing a general outline that is adaptable to all of the 200 corpus texts that are presently under study. Section 6.2 subsequently presents detailed analyses of the five texts that were selected from the corpus (see section 4.2), demonstrating how each individual text relates to the schematic argumentative structure. Finally, section 6.3 summarizes the most important insights gained from the investigation of the argumentative dimension of Parker's writing and explains how the findings of this chapter shed light on the research questions. The summary is closed with a proposal as to how the argumentation analysis will be employed in order to assist the exploration of appraisal, which is subsequently performed in chapter 7.

## **6.1 SCHEMATIC ARGUMENTATION STRUCTURE IN THE CORPUS MATERIAL**

When undertaking argumentation analysis it is of crucial importance to pinpoint the standpoint, i.e. the basic issue that the argumentation is designed to corroborate or refute. The standpoint of the argumentation is intrinsically bound up with the notions of genre and activity type, which were discussed in section 2.3. The discussion showed that it is not unproblematic to univocally pinpoint the type of communicative activity and genre that is currently under the microscope. I arrived at the idea that wine critics' tasting notes can simultaneously be designated by the communicative activity type labels of 'aesthetic review' and 'consumer advocacy' with their associated genres of 'assessment' and 'recommendation'. This ambiguity has implications for the reconstruction of the argumentative standpoint, i.e. the standpoint could be understood to be normative, relating to the genre of assessment, as well as prescriptive, with ref-

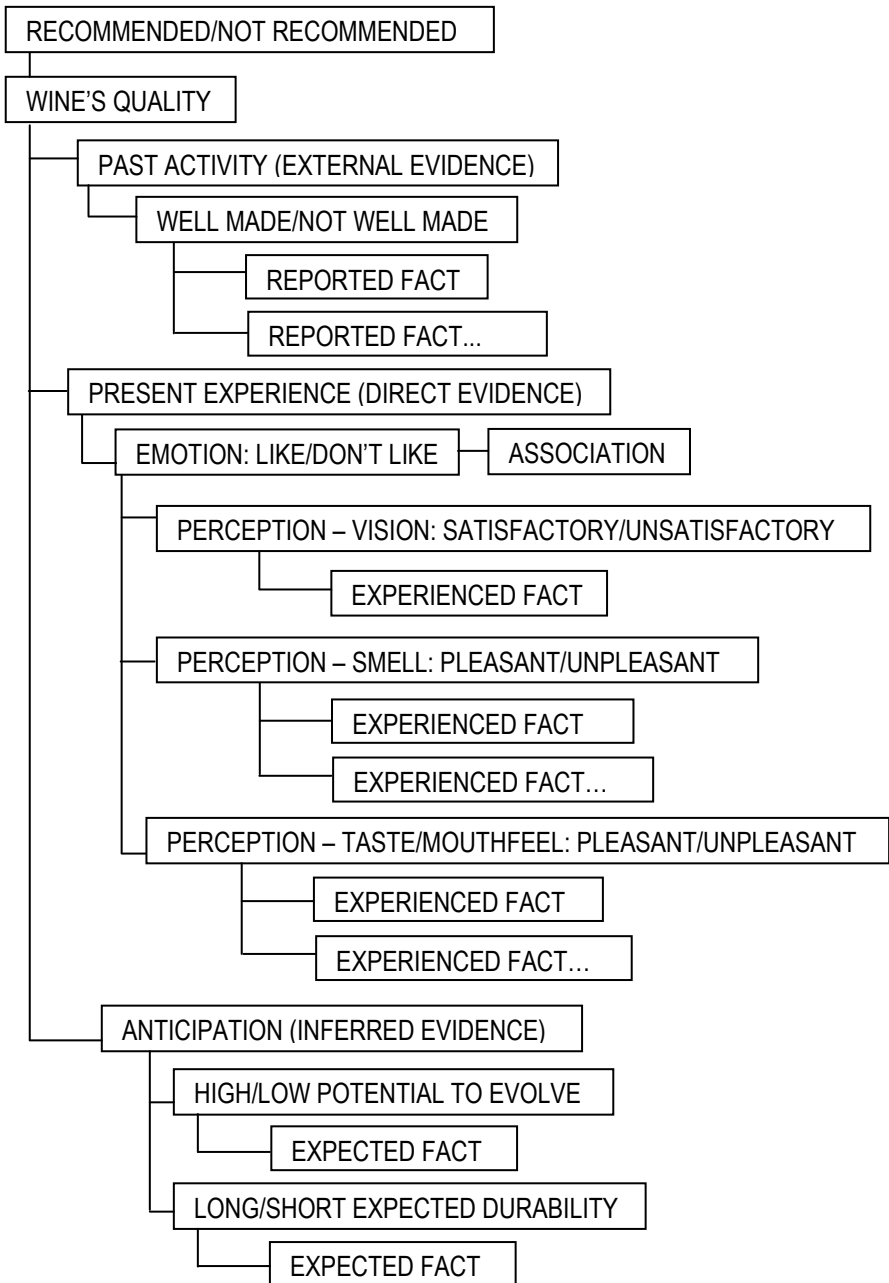
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<sup>96</sup> My sincere thanks are due to numerous colleagues who have willingly afforded their time and competence to discussions of how to apply the methodological tools of argumentation theory to the present material: Professor Frans van Eemeren and the argumentation group at the Department of speech communication, argumentation and rhetoric, the University of Amsterdam, Professor Anders Sigrell, Lund University, as well as the discourse group at Lund University and the linguistics seminar and discourse groups at Växjö University.

erence to the genre of ‘recommendation’.<sup>97</sup> Given the reviews’ ambivalent communicative purpose, I have opted for the reconstruction of double standpoints, an abstraction illustrated in figure 6:1 below. The connection between the standpoints, which is visualized by means of the line between the two upper-most boxes in figure 6.1, is intended to illuminate the fact that the normative standpoint can also be understood to function as support for the prescriptive standpoint. The two standpoints are thus seen to have a hierarchical relationship to one another, the prescriptive standpoint being super-ordinate to the normative standpoint. In other words, the ultimate purpose of the assessment of the wines’ quality is to provide consumption recommendations. The investigation of argumentation in the entire corpus furthermore suggests that the double standpoints relating to recommendation and assessment of the wine are supported by a number of arguments which together are designed to convince the readers of the wine’s qualitative worth as well as advise them regarding future consumption. Figure 6:1 shows an abstraction of the texts’ argumentative hierarchy, which is designed to have the flexibility to incorporate all of the 200 investigated texts.

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<sup>97</sup> I thank the research seminar group at the Department of speech communication, argumentation and rhetoric, The University of Amsterdam, for fruitful discussions in response to my presentation (5 March 2010) about how to define the communicative activity type under study and how to capture the standpoint in an illuminating manner.



**Figure 6:1 Schematic overview of the argumentation in Parker's reviews**



The schematic outline represented in figure 6:1 is related to the preceding chapter's division into thematic units in the following way: The production-related unit is reinterpreted as an argument referencing the appropriateness of past activity, namely whether or not the reviewed wine was well made. The production-related argument, which relates to the way in which the reviewed product has come into being, can be understood to bestow the resulting product with 'credence' (Mueller et al. (2009), see section 5.3.2). As shown in table 5:4, approximately two thirds of the corpus texts include a thematic unit devoted to the wine's production. The main production-related argument is understood to be supported by varying numbers of sub-level arguments with the unifying characteristic that they are based on evidence provided by sources that are external to the writer. The extent to which such enumerated facts are intuitively perceived as part of each individual text's argumentative hierarchy may vary. The analytical strategy adopted in the current study is to strive for a maximally argumentative reading of the texts according to which all such elements are understood to have potential argumentative significance in relation to the standpoints. The close interpretive analyses of the five selected reviews, which are presented in section 6.2, demonstrates and purports to justify this maximally argumentative reading of the texts.

Furthermore, the descriptive-evaluative thematic unit is reinterpreted as another main argument in the texts' schematic argumentation structure. The fact that all of the corpus texts include a descriptive-evaluative unit (see table 5:4) can be taken as suggestive of the idea that the descriptive-evaluative argumentation is of more immediate significance for the justification of the standpoints than the production-related argumentation. This idea is reinforced by the observation that the production-related unit is textually backgrounded with respect to the descriptive-evaluative unit in the surface form of the reviews (see sections 5.3.2, 5.3.3 and 5.4.1). In the interpretive argumentation analysis, these two thematic units are however seen as co-coordinative, each of them providing their own essential contribution to the justification of the standpoints. The descriptive-evaluative argumentation in the wine reviews is fundamentally different from the production-related argumentation in that the underlying evidence is taken to be the writer's immediate experience of the wine, involving emotional and associative meanings as well as organoleptic support for such emotional claims based on direct evidence from visual, olfactory and gustatory perceptions. Figure 6:1 above also suggests that the consumption-oriented unit, which was shown in table 5:4 to be realized in 90% of the corpus reviews, has potential argumentative significance. A consumption-oriented unit whose formulations suggest extensive potential to develop and future durability may contribute to the justification of the normative standpoint. This idea is based on Parker's declaration that "potential for further evolution and improvement – aging" (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker's rating system) is allowed to affect the assessment of the wine.

As will become clear in section 6.2, the most crucial argumentative significance of the consumption-oriented unit is however its function as an expression of the prescriptive standpoint referring to whether or not the reviewed wine is recommended. Similarly, the numerical scores, which appear in the heading of the reviews (see section 5.3.1), are understood to have argumentative significance as overt realizations of the normative standpoint, relating to the reviews' ultimate purpose of assessment.<sup>98</sup> The reinterpretations of the consumption-oriented unit as an overt expression of the prescriptive standpoint and of the numerical score as a realization of the normative standpoint will be further discussed throughout section 6.2, where it is demonstrated how the generic argumentative structure can be adjusted to accommodate the argumentation in the five selected reviews.

## 6.2 ARGUMENTATION ANALYSIS OF SELECTED REVIEWS

This section is devoted to close, interpretive analyses of the wine reviews that were introduced in chapter 4. The argumentation analysis of the five selected reviews is presented in the order in which the texts appeared in section 4.2. As already indicated in section 6.1, the analysis takes as its starting point the separation into thematic units that was undertaken in the preceding chapter. In this chapter, the thematic units are reinterpreted as parts of an argumentative organization. In accordance with the notation system proposed by the pragma-dialectical methodology, the standpoints as well as the arguments are given numerical labels. These labels are intended to facilitate subsequent discussions, but the hierarchical organization of the argumentation is primarily visualized by means of layers in the figures, which are designed to display the argumentative reconstructions. To make it easier to understand the analytical overview presented in the figures as well as the accompanying discussion of how the argumentative pattern has been elucidated, the relevant passage of the original text, the formulation, is consistently given in italics above the reconstruction of each argument in the argumentation structure, i.e. the argumentative proposition. Argumentative propositions are represented by means of capitals. Throughout the discussion, the wording of the original text will be referred to as a 'formulation' while the reconstruction that results from the transformation operation will be labelled 'argumentative proposition'. In order to keep the figures as simple as possible, the potential presence of argumentative schemes and topoi are only ventilated in the discussion and not represented in the figures.

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<sup>98</sup> The reconstruction of the numerical score as an overt realization of a normative standpoint has not been completely self-evident. It is only after numerous discussions with other scholars that I have arrived at the idea that this is the most appropriate way of abstracting the argumentative discourse under study. I am particularly indebted to Dr Jean Wagemans, The University of Amsterdam, for his engagement in this issue.

When it is relevant, the discussion also incorporates comparisons with argumentative features of other corpus texts so as to illuminate argumentative tendencies and patterns that encourage particular world views.

As already explained in section 4.2, the goal of the interpretive argumentation analyses is to illuminate the diversity in Parker’s writing in addition to showing that which is typical. To avoid tedious repetitions of features that are similar in the five reviews, the focus of the discussion presented throughout sections 6.2.1–6.2.5 will be the additions to the whole picture that the scrutiny of each new text contributes.

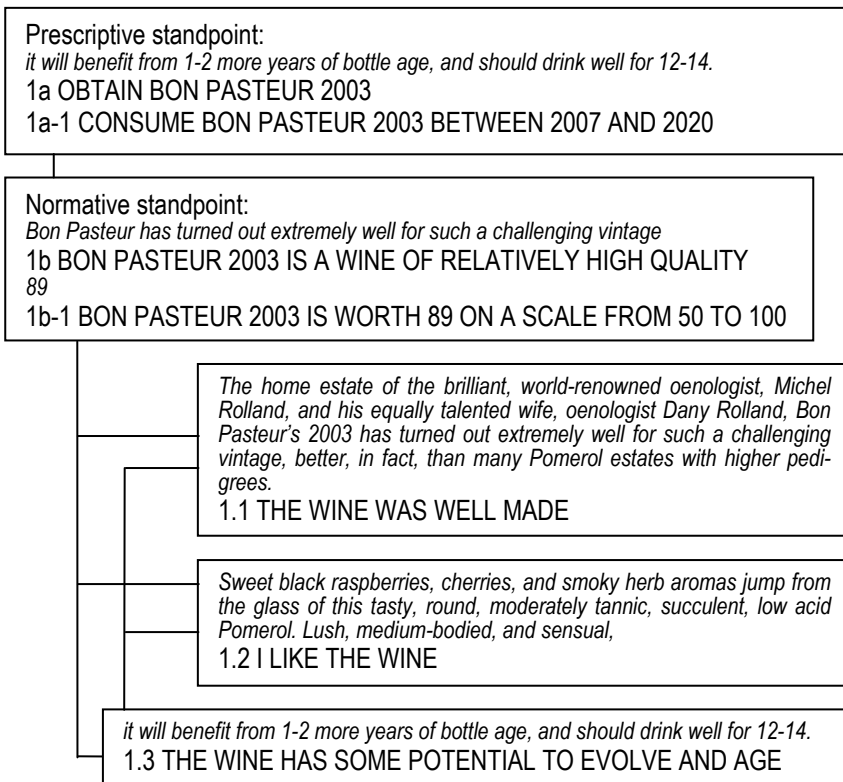
### 6.2.1 CHÂTEAU BON PASTEUR 2003

As already clarified in section 4.2, the investigation is initiated by a text which deals with a wine that the writer has appreciated to a certain, but not a maximum, degree, i.e. a text which can be seen as representative of the majority of the tasting notes in the corpus (see figure 4:1). Table 6:1 below displays the division of this text into thematic units:

**Table 6:1 Thematic units in the review of Château Bon Pasteur 2003**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSUMPTION
2003 Bon Pasteur A Bordeaux blend dry table wine from Pomerol, Bordeaux, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: 89 Drink: 2007–2020 Cost: \$46 (45)	The home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist, Michel Rolland, and his equally talented wife, oenologist Dany Rolland, Bon Pasteur’s 2003 has turned out extremely well for such a challenging vintage, better, in fact, than many Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees.	Sweet black raspberries, cherries, and smoky herb aromas jump from the glass of this tasty, round, moderately tannic, succulent, low acid Pomerol. Lush, medium-bodied, and sensual,	...it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age, and should drink well for 12-14.

The figure below shows my proposed reconstruction of the double standpoints as well as the main arguments that have been abstracted from the formulations in the review of Château Bon Pasteur.



**Figure 6:2 Double standpoints and main arguments in the review of Bon Pasteur 2003**

As illustrated in figure 6:2, I have taken the Bon Pasteur review to be made up of double standpoints and two, or possibly three, arguments in favour of these standpoints, which together are designed to convince the readers of the wine's qualitative worth as well as recommend them to obtain it. For methodological purposes, the two standpoints have been given individual notations. Although this is not indicated by the notations given to the arguments, these are understood to function as support for both of the standpoints.

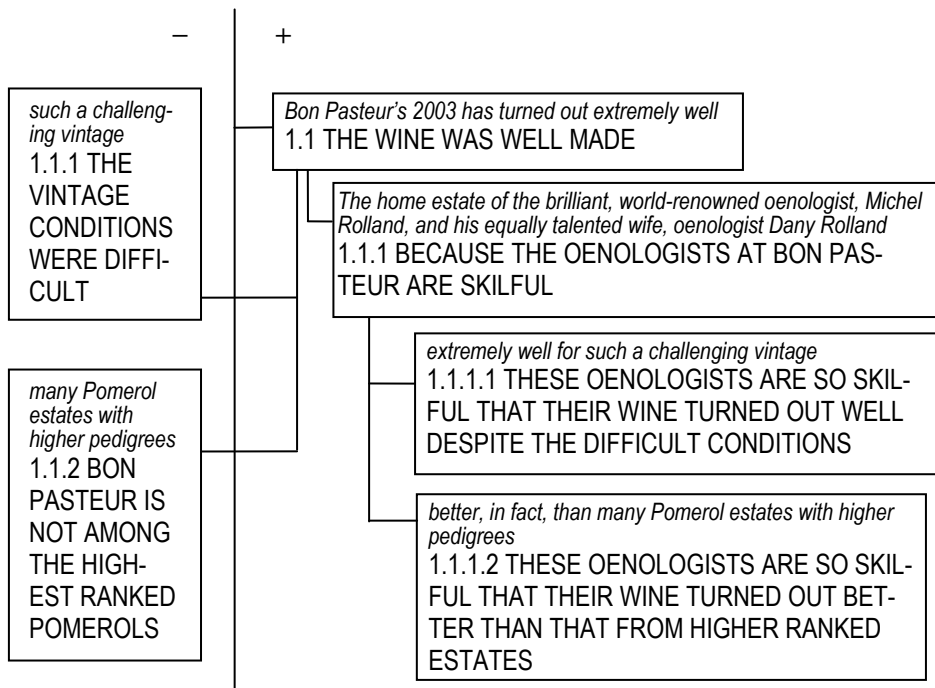
I take the normative standpoint (1b, which is supported by 1b-1 in the figure above) to refer to a purported difference of opinion regarding this wine's quality, while the prescriptive standpoint (1a and 1a-1) concerns whether or not it is recommended. In the case of the Bon Pasteur review, I understand the arguer's position to be positive, i.e. that the wine is of relatively high quality, which simultaneously entails a recommendation to the intended addressee to also obtain and drink the wine during the proposed period. As indicated in figure 6:2, the superordinate standpoint 1b has been reconstructed on the basis of the expression *Bon Pasteur has turned out extremely well for such a challenging vintage*.

The numerical score 89 is understood to function as substantiation of 1b, instantiating the subordinate normative standpoint 1b-1.

The prescriptive standpoint has been abstracted from the formulation that refers to the wine's future development and durability: *it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age, and should drink well for 12-14*. The formulation has been interpreted as an indirect speech act which invokes the core meaning of advising the purported addressee what to do as well as when to do it. In order to clarify this aspect, the declarative construction that occurs in the surface form of the message has been transformed into the imperative. The communicative activity of consumer advocacy that these texts are part of justifies the reconstruction of a prescriptive standpoint.

The standpoints can be understood to be supported by two or potentially three main arguments: The first of these concerns production-related aspects comprising the thematic unit that was referred to under the label production-related in chapter 5. This main argument has been deemed to amount to the argumentative proposition 1.1 THE WINE WAS WELL MADE. The second concerns the experience of tasting the wine and serves the purpose of guaranteeing that the audience's future experience when consuming this wine will meet their expectations. What was identified as the descriptive-evaluative thematic unit is taken to express the primary argument 1.2 I LIKE THE WINE in the argumentative reconstruction of the text. The reference to the wine's potential to develop and anticipated durability, which follows the depiction of the tasting experience in the surface form of the Bon Pasteur review (see figure 6.1), has been understood to have potential argumentative significance, bestowing 'credence' on the product. It has therefore been reconstructed as the argumentative proposition 1.3 THE WINE HAS SOME POTENTIAL TO EVOLVE AND AGE. It should be acknowledged that the reconstruction of this argumentative proposition is not entirely uncontroversial. The formulation occurring in the consumption-oriented unit could also be understood not to have this additional argumentative significance, but only fulfilling the function of instantiating the prescriptive standpoint. This will be further discussed below in the analysis of the next review.

In the following, I will strip the review of its original formulations so that a plausible argumentative skeleton of each thematic unit can be laid bare. Figure 6:3 shows my argumentative reconstruction of the production-related unit of the Bon Pasteur review:



**Figure 6:3** Argumentative organization of the production-related unit of the Bon Pasteur review

As clarified in figure 6:3, the main argument of the production-related unit of the Bon Pasteur review amounts to the argumentative proposition 1.1 THE WINE WAS WELL MADE. This superordinate argumentative proposition is arrived at by means of the transformation operation of substitution of the formulation *Bon Pasteur's 2003 turned out extremely well*. The primary argument is in turn supported by a second-order argument, which brings into the argumentation the factual, incontestable evidence that the Rollands are the producers/oenologists at Bon Pasteur. The reconstruction of +1.1.1 BECAUSE THE OENOLOGISTS AT BON PASTEUR ARE SKILFUL is based on the formulation *The home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist Michel Rolland and his equally talented wife, oenologist Dany Rolland*, and has been arrived at by means of addition, substitution and permutation. Although the formulation that instantiates 1.1.1 precedes the one that instantiates the superordinate argument 1.1 in the text's surface form, the transformation operation of permutation has been employed here to explicate the hierarchical relation between these two utterances. Furthermore, the connective BECAUSE has been added to highlight the relation hinted at by means of the zeugmatic combination of the two utterances, which are grammatically linked together by the mu-

tual subject *Bon Pasteur*. Substitution has been employed to rephrase the formulation into a simpler expression. The text does not present overt markers to indicate the type of argument scheme drawn on. Instead, it is left up to the audience to infer the unexpressed premise so that the argument scheme is made explicit. The link that is invoked between the wine makers' capacity and the resulting quality of the wine can be understood to be based on symptomatic argumentation along the following lines: "It is characteristic of these oenologists that they make excellent wine". The connection could perhaps also be seen as based on argumentation of cause and effect: "The good quality of this wine is the result of the wine makers' high competence". It is disputable which of these argument schemes the arguer can be held responsible for having employed, and both of these analyses seem equally possible.<sup>99</sup> Perhaps we could understand the symptomatic argumentation which relates to these particular wine makers to be embedded within a more general argumentation scheme of cause and effect, which promotes the competence of the wine maker as the prime driving force behind the resulting quality of the wine. This argumentation scheme ambiguity will be further discussed below. The potential rhetorical effect of the equivocation of the text's formulations will be explored in chapter 7.

What has been reconstructed as the second-order +argument in figure 6:3, i.e. +1.1.1 BECAUSE THE OENOLOGISTS AT BON PASTEUR ARE SKILFUL, is seen as further supported by two third-order +arguments. Here, the formulation *extremely well for such a challenging vintage* suggests that difficulties had to be overcome by the oenologists in order to arrive at the extremely good quality. The information provided about the vintage can be understood to be based on factual, generally accessible evidence about the weather conditions of the particular year, a characteristic of the production-oriented unit that has already been discussed above. In terms of argumentation, the reference to these requisites has been interpreted as a means to underscore the oenologists' capacity, and the formulation has therefore been reconstructed as +1.1.1.1 THESE OENOLOGISTS ARE SO SKILFUL THAT THEIR WINE TURNED OUT WELL DESPITE THE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS. Simultaneously, the expression *such a challenging vintage* can be taken to function on the minus side of the argumentation, incorporating an imagined antagonist's reservation regarding this wine's quality based on knowledge about the difficult conditions of the vintage. This reservation is illustrated by the reconstruction -1.1.1 THE VINTAGE CONDITIONS WERE DIFFICULT. Furthermore, the formulation *better, in fact, than many other Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees*, which,

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<sup>99</sup> The pragma-dialectical argumentation theory proposes a normative model of argumentation which relies on a testing method according to which the application of different argument schemes is evaluated by means of critical questions. In order to pose the relevant critical questions, it is of crucial importance to establish which type of argument scheme has been employed by the arguer (van Eemeren & Grootendorst's 1992:101). The problem of distinguishing symptomatic from causal argumentation in authentic discourse is discussed by Snoeck-Henkemans (2002).

just like the comment about the vintage, is based on factual evidence (see the presentation of the unofficial ranking system of Pomerol in section 4.2), has also been understood to have the potential to fulfil double argumentative functions: On the one hand, it underpins +1.1.1, instantiating the argumentative proposition +1.1.1.2 THESE OENOLOGISTS ARE SO SKILFUL THAT THEIR WINE TURNED OUT BETTER THAN THAT FROM HIGHER RANKED ESTATES. On the other, this formulation can also be taken to operate on the minus side of the argumentation, realizing a sceptical opponent's objection. In the analytical overview above, I have therefore reconstructed the following negatively oriented argumentative proposition: -1.1.2 BON PASTEUR IS NOT AMONG THE HIGHEST RANKED POMEROLS. The comparative form *better...than* suggests that argumentation based on analogy has been drawn on. The comparison of Bon Pasteur with *many other Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees* construes the writer and his audience as fellow members of a group of knowledgeable and experienced wine consumers for whom this comparison is meaningful. The rhetorical potential of the particular formulations chosen, i.e. how stylistic choices function to position the addressee so that agreement is facilitated, will be the focus of chapter 7.

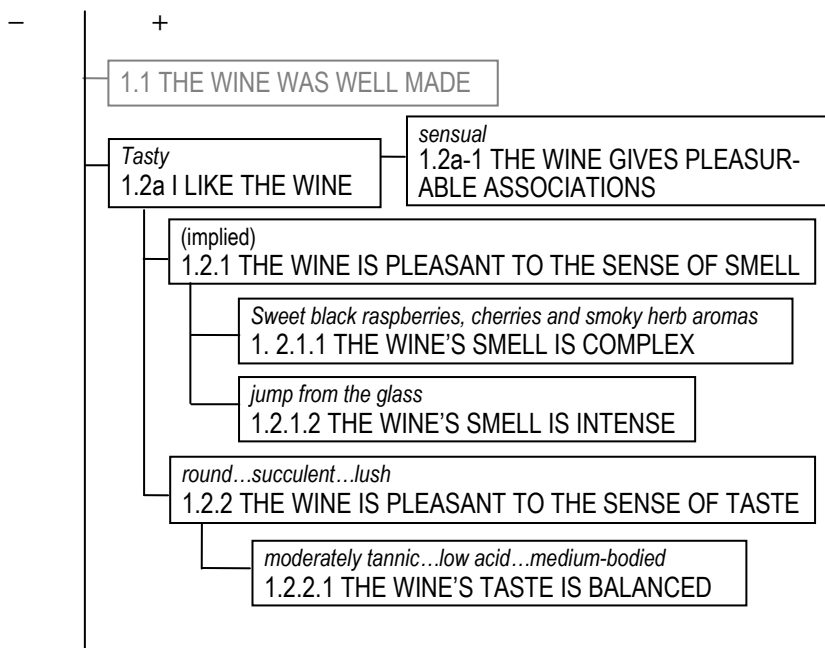
The assumption underlying the third-order pro-argument +1.1.1.2 is that estates with high pedigrees ought to produce the best wine. If understood in terms of two coordinated scales (see section 3.2.2), this topos can be captured as follows 'The higher pedigree a wine has, the better it is'. However, in the case of Bon Pasteur, this assumption has turned out not to be justified: Bon Pasteur has turned out better than the wine from many higher-ranked estates, and this is due to the fact that the oenologists are so skilful, which brings another competing topos into the colloquy, namely 'The more competent the oenologist, the better the wine'. The expression *better, in fact, than many other Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees* indicates that in the present case we can understand the second of these *topoi* to be ranked higher than the first. The notion of value hierarchies refers to the ways in which different audiences arrange the values they adhere to (Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:80–83). Value hierarchies are not seen as stable constructions, but values within hierarchies are allowed to vary in intensity and still be accepted, a phenomenon that the proficient arguer can make use of in order to get his ideas accepted. In the present context, the two *topoi* drawn on can be seen as a particular arrangement of two value scales both of which are already accepted by the intended audience.

The reconstruction above has proceeded from what I have taken to be the rhetorical audience's perspective. In addition to the audience of prospective wine consumers which the text construes for itself as its preferred readers, Parker's actual audience can also be understood to include wine producers, i.e. owners of estates in for instance Bordeaux. This actual audience's economical success depends upon consumers' willingness to invest in their products. Due to Parker's influence on today's globalized wine market, they need to keep up with his system of value hierarchies so that their conception of wine quality



correlates with the ideas accepted by financially strong consumer groups. The particular production techniques that used to be the trade marks of the different estates, which were kept secret and passed on from one generation to the next, are therefore beginning to be replaced by the same standardized modern techniques employed by professional oenologists. This is claimed to have led to the phenomenon of Parkerization (e.g. Nossiter 2004), which was described in section 1.1.

I now proceed to the next thematic unit in the review of Bon Pasteur. In terms of argumentative organization, the unit referring to the tasting experience is taken to be the second main argument in the argumentation of this tasting note. The internal argumentative hierarchy of 1.2 I LIKE THE WINE is displayed in the figure below:



**Figure 6:4** Argumentative organization of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bon Pasteur review

The descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bon Pasteur review is much more condensed than the production-related unit that was analyzed above, which means that extensive reconstructions had to be performed in order to arrive at a plausible outline of the argumentation. +1.2a I LIKE THE WINE has been reconstructed on the basis of a quality that is ascribed to the wine: *tasty*. The formulation leaves the source of this evaluation implicit, i.e. the arguer himself. The implicit source of the evaluation has nevertheless been reconstructed by means

of the transformation operation of addition. This reconstruction makes it clear that the second primary +argument rests on the implicit assumption that the writer's likings or dislikes are relevant for the reader's readiness to embrace the standpoint, i.e. regard this wine as having relatively high quality so as to be worthy of being obtained. It is this implicit premise in Parker's tasting notes that Aimé Guibert is ironizing when he summarizes Parker's wine writing like this: "What I like is good, what I like the most is the best" (see section 1.1). The communicative potential of the fact that the formulation leaves the experiencer implicit will be further discussed in chapter 7.

In terms of argument schemes, +1.2a can be seen to be based on ethotic argumentation, relying on the idea that the assessment is issued by a good person (see section 3.2.2).<sup>100</sup> In order for this argument to increase the plausibility of the standpoint, it is of course crucial, first, that the audience recognizes the arguer to be a person of good moral character, and second, that the arguer's character is relevant in relation to the context. The reflection of Parker's character given in the media as well as the image presented on *The Wine Advocate* website can be understood to provide the necessary requisites: Parker is an independent wine critic who does not have any compromising alliances with the wine trade, so if he says that something is good it must be because he wants others to share the pleasurable experience, not because he has something to gain from saying so, i.e. Parker has good will as well as moral virtue.<sup>101</sup>

In view of the fact that Parker functions as an expert in the socio-cultural practice of wine consumption, we can also understand an argument scheme of expert opinion to be of relevance in the present context.<sup>102</sup> Again, the media image of Parker can be understood to be crucial for the validity of this reasoning: Parker is portrayed as having an infallible sense of smell and taste, i.e. the practical wisdom that is assumed to be required in the field of wine tasting (see section 1.1 and 2.1), so if he likes something it must be good.<sup>103</sup> Therefore, if he says he likes this wine (*tasty*), this is an argument that increases the actuality of the standpoints.

<sup>100</sup> The following formalization designed for critical evaluation of ethotic argumentation is proposed by Walton (1996:86):

If  $x$  is a person of good moral character, then what  $x$  contends ( $A$ ) should be accepted (as more plausible)

$a$  is a person of good moral character

Therefore, what  $a$  contends ( $A$ ) should be accepted (as more plausible).

<sup>101</sup> Good will and moral virtue are two of the ethos components mentioned by Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1378a).

<sup>102</sup> Walton (2005:3) formalizes this argument scheme along the following lines:

$E$  is an expert in domain  $D$

$E$  asserts that  $A$  is known to be true

$A$  is within  $D$

Therefore,  $A$  may plausibly be taken to be true

<sup>103</sup> Practical wisdom is the third ethos component according to Aristotle's (*On rhetoric* 1378a) description.

+1.2a is supported by an intricate system of subordinate argumentation based on evidence arrived at by means of sensory perceptions. As pointed out above, the formulation that has been used to express +1.2 is highly condensed, and it has therefore been necessary to employ the transformation operations of substitution, addition as well as permutation in order to arrive at an appropriate reconstruction. The first of the second-order +arguments refers to the sense of smell. Although no specific formulation can be identified as instantiating this argument, +1.2.1 has nevertheless been reconstructed as THE WINE IS PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF SMELL. The enumeration of *sweet black raspberries, cherries, and smoky herb aromas*, which I have listed as a third-order argument given in support of the implicit claim +1.2.1, could be taken to indicate that the wine's smell is perceived as complex. While the superordinate level of +1.2 is emotionally oriented and the second-order level concerns sensory appreciation, the third-order level suggests an objective reflection of the world. This type of portrayal, although perhaps not reflecting any objective truth about the world in the sense of properties that can be detected by means of technical equipment and captured in chemical terminology, nevertheless targets olfactory qualities that are ostensibly in the wine rather than in any human experiencer. I have taken this type of depiction to provide factual support designed to corroborate the emotionally oriented dimension of the experience. The argument scheme underlying the sub-ordinate argumentation of +1.2 can be understood to be symptomatic along the following lines: "It is typical of good wines that they display these olfactory characteristics."

From a more detailed analytical perspective, the presentation of olfactory components can be understood to draw on a type of argumentation termed 'division argument' by Perelman (1977:98–99), which can be used to highlight the presence of the component parts of an entity.<sup>104</sup> On the basis of the previous discussion of the subjective nature of olfactory perception and the synaesthetic influence on the choice of aroma descriptors (see sections 2.1 and 2.2), I am inclined to assign more argumentative importance to the number of descriptors used than to the exact meaning of each of the specific terms. This idea will be further expounded below in the analysis of the review of Château Angélu as well as in chapter 7, where the persuasiveness of Parker's texts is investigated by means of the analytical tools of Appraisal theory. In the argumentative organization displayed in figure 6.3, the description of the wine's aromatics has therefore been reconstructed as +1.2.1.1 THE WINE'S SMELL IS COMPLEX.

The second third-order +argument given in support of the claim +1.2.1 THE WINE IS PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF SMELL has been reconstructed on the basis of the manner-of-motion verb *jump*. According to Caballero (2007),

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<sup>104</sup> In the pragma-dialectical model, Perelman's proposed 'division argument' would be included under the symptomatic argumentation scheme, i.e. the display of these olfactory characteristics is a sign that the wine is complex.

who has studied manner-of-motion verbs in wine tasting notes, *jump* occurs in these texts alongside other motion verbs, like for instance *emerge*, *creep*, *glide*, to express the degree of intensity (force/speed) and/or persistence of the quality that is being described. Compared to *emerge*, *creep* and *glide*, *jump* has been taken to indicate a high degree of intensity since this manner-of-motion verb entails force as well as speed.

Furthermore, +1.2 is supported by arguments referring to the taste and mouthfeel of the wine. These arguments (+1.2.2 with subordinate pro-arguments) have been extracted from the same noun phrases as the super-ordinate argument +1.2, i.e. the formulations *this tasty, round, moderately tannic, succulent, low acid Pomerol* and *lush, medium-bodied, and sensual* have been taken to express arguments on different levels of +1.2: While *tasty*, which initiates the textual string, refers to the super-ordinate level of primary +arguments, *round* instantiates the second-order argument +1.2.2 THE WINE IS PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF TASTE, which is understood to support +1.2. With *moderately tannic* the argumentation moves to a level which is subordinate to +1.2.2 expressing the argument +1.2.2.1 THE WINE'S TASTE IS BALANCED. *Succulent* has been reconstructed as part of +1.2.2 and so adding amplification. Just like *moderately tannic*, *low acid* is taken to be an expression that supports the second-order level, i.e. it is seen as a partial instantiation of the third-order argumentative proposition +1.2.2.1 THE WINE'S TASTE IS BALANCED. *Lush* is seen as further reinforcing +1.2.2. The formulation *medium-bodied*, which follows *lush* in the surface form of the text, is taken to make up the third component of the argument +1.2.2.1. Finally, *sensual*, which concludes the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bon Pasteur review, has been deemed to bestow additional support on the superordinate argumentative proposition +1.2a I LIKE THE WINE, which motivates the reconstruction of the argument +1.2a-1 THE WINE GIVES PLEASANT ASSOCIATIONS.

In addition to the ethotic argument scheme that underlies +1.2a, *sensual* draws on another type of rhetorical argument scheme that I will refer to as 'association'.<sup>105</sup> The arguer can be seen to invite the audience to embrace the idea that the actuality of the standpoints, i.e. in this case 1a BON PASTEUR 2003 IS A WINE OF RELATIVELY HIGH QUALITY and 1b OBTAIN BON PASTEUR 2003, is increased by the associations that the item *sensual* makes present. Gilbert (1994:176) describes associative argumentation as drawing on "a synthesis of experience and insight". Based on Ripley's (2008) interpretation of associative argumentation in advertisements, a stereotypical understanding of the item *sensual* is that for male readers, it could be taken to involve an im-

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<sup>105</sup> Tindale's (2004:76) proposes the following formalization of what he terms the argument scheme of allusion:

*x* is evoked by a discourse

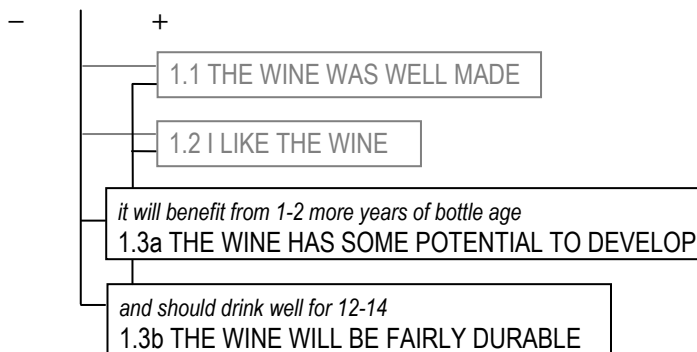
*x* involves a connection with *A* that when made present increases the plausibility of *A*

Therefore, *A* is plausible

plicit suggestion that drinking this wine is like being with a sensual woman, which is suggested by the text to enhance the actuality by the standpoints. For female readers, the corresponding stereotypical reading of the same item might be that if they drink this wine they become that sensual woman, which could also be taken to enhance the plausibility of the standpoint in the eyes of the ideal audience that the text constructs for itself. Silverstein (2004:225–226), who has analyzed tasting notes written by the British wine critic Michael Broadbent, confirms the idea that associative wine terminology (e.g. *well-bred, gentlemanly*) tends to spill over on the person consuming and talking about the wine. Argumentation from association has an important function in construing the communal identity of arguer and audience. The importance of associative argumentation will be further explored below throughout this and the following chapter.

The argumentation analysis that has been undertaken in this section has resulted in a complete reorganization of the ordering of ideas so that the abstraction that is arrived at is considerably distinct from the surface structure of the actual formulations. The rhetorical potential of the ordering of strings such as *this tasty, round, moderately tannic, succulent, low acid Pomerol. Lush, medium-bodied, and sensual* will be further explored in chapter 7.

I will now examine the thematic unit that is devoted to specifying the anticipated development and durability of the wine. It can be debated whether it is justifiable to regard this formulation as an argument given in support of the standpoints in addition to its function as the indirect realization of the prescriptive standpoint, i.e. the recommendation to obtain this wine and to consume it during the specified period. I have nonetheless opted for an analysis where the expression *it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age and should drink well for 12-14* fulfils both of these functions. The figure below presents the argumentative organization of what has been regarded as the consumption-oriented unit of the review of Bon Pasteur:



**Figure 6:5 Argumentative organization of the consumption-oriented unit of the Bon Pasteur review**

While the internal organization of the argumentation in the production-related as well as the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bon Pasteur review has been taken to have subordinative linking (see figures 6.2 and 6.3), the potential argumentative organization of the future-oriented consumption unit is seen as coordinative. From the perspective of the future, the formulation *it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age* is taken to amount to +1.3a THE WINE HAS SOME POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP. The reference to the wine's potential to develop has been seen as an argument designed to increase the plausibility of the standpoints on the basis that a fine Bordeaux wine traditionally requires ageing "to purge it of its grossness, to give its constituents time to agree and perform whatever chemical choreography is in their destiny" (Johnson 2005:43). In the context of Bordeaux wine, 1-2 years is not a very long time, however, so this wine's potential to develop is presented as rather limited. +1.3a is coordinated with +1.3b THE WINE WILL BE FAIRLY DURABLE, which has been reconstructed on the basis of the time specification 12-14. +1.3b has been taken to strengthen the tenability of the standpoints based on the idea that durability is a desirable quality, not only in Bordeaux wines, but in general, which is captured by the topos 'That which is durable is better than that which is transitory', a topos that coordinates the scales of durability and goodness.

No overt sub-ordinate arguments are given in support of +1.3a and +1.3b. As indicated in section 5.3.4, my interpretation is instead that the writer intends the preceding arguments (+1.1 and +1.2) to function as support for +1.3a and +1.3b, i.e. that different claims made in +1.1 and +1.2 together add up to the basis on which +1.3a and +1.3b is founded. There are no textual indications signalling that the production-related unit is connected to the consumption-oriented unit in this way. An initiated addressee might nevertheless infer a potential connection between the presentation of the vintage as challenging and the idea that this wine only has limited and not extensive potential to evolve and will only be fairly and not very durable. The zeugmatic construction that links the descriptive-evaluative unit to the consumption-oriented unit can however be seen as a linguistic cue that is indicative of the connection between the present perceptual experience and the future evolution of this wine:

(6:1) Lush, medium-bodied, and sensual, it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age, and should drink well for 12-14.

The constructed example below is designed to illustrate the linking function of the zeugmatic construction. The formulation in (6:1a) does not to the same extent indicate any connection between the perceptual experience and the prediction regarding the wine's evolution.

(6:1a) Sweet black raspberries, cherries, and smoky herb aromas jump from the glass of this low acid, lush, medium-bodied, and sensual Pomerol.

This wine will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age, and should drink well for 12-14.

In the analysis presented in this chapter, the prime concern is to try to abstract the ideas that are expressed as well as the connections between these ideas. The rhetorical potential of the choice of formulations used to express the argumentative propositions will be more extensively discussed below in section 7.2.1, where the same review is scrutinized with the assistance of a different set of analytical tools.

In addition to +1.1 and +1.2, the writer's experience with similar wines, although it does not figure explicitly in this particular review, is understood to provide the most important substantiation of +1.3a and b. As pointed out in section 5.3.4, this idea is based on the media portrayal of Parker as an extremely experienced wine taster who has tasted 10,000 wines a year for the past thirty years. In that sense, the reasoning underlying arguments +1.3a and +1.3b can be said to be based on analogy along the following lines: "All other known wines with the same qualities as this one has developed in this way, and therefore this wine will develop in this way too". In order for +1.3a and +1.3b to be perceived as reasonable, the audience needs to resort to information about the writer's experience that is not available in this particular text, but accessible as contextual knowledge.<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> A simplified version of the argumentation analysis of Bon Pasteur 2003 is provided in Hommerberg (2010).

## 6.2.2 CHÂTEAU ANGÉLUS 2005

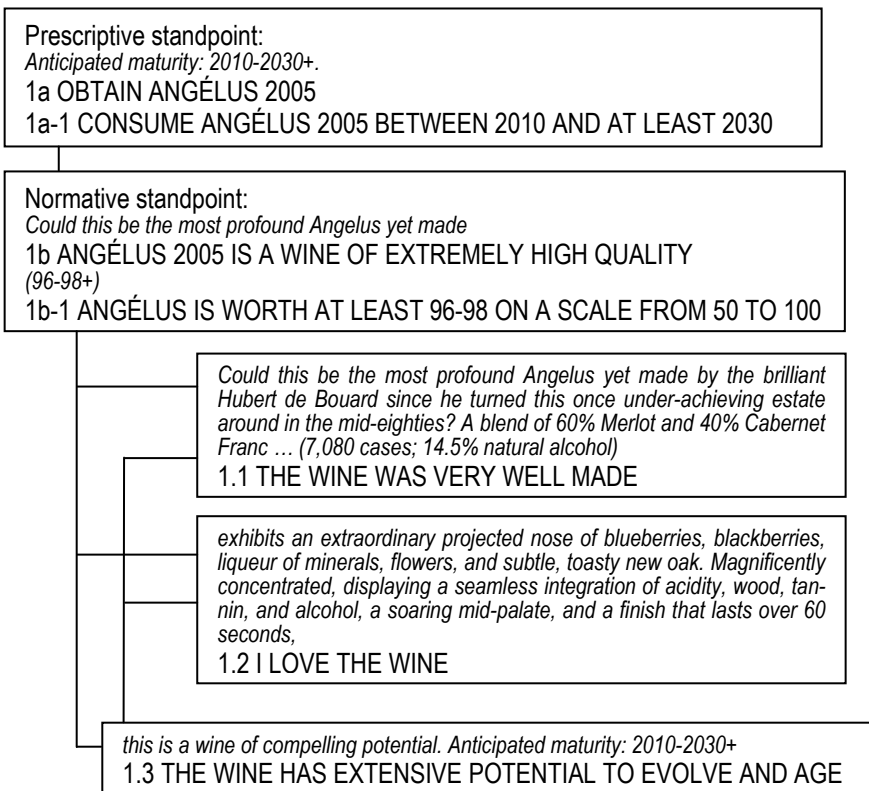
I now proceed the examination of the argumentative organization of Parker's tasting notes by the analysis of the review of Château Angélu 2005, a wine that the writer has appreciated to a very high degree, which is indicated by the numerical rating of (96-98+). Table 6:2 shows how this review is dividable into thematic units.

**Table 6:2 Thematic units in the review of Angélu 2005**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSUMPTION
2005 Angélu A Bordeaux blend dry table wine from St Émilion, Bordeaux, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: (96-98+) Drink: 2010–2030 Cost: \$263-\$460	Could this be the most profound Ange- lus yet made by the brilliant Hubert de Bouard since he turned this once un- der-achieving estate around in the mid- eighties? A blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc... (7,080 cases; 14.5% natural alcohol)	the spectacular, inky/blue/purple-hued 2005 (7,080 cases; 14.5% natural alco- hol) exhibits an ex- traordinary projected nose of blueberries, blackberries, liqueur of minerals, flowers, and subtle, toasty new oak. Magnificently concentrated, display- ing a seamless inte- gration of acidity, wood, tannin, and al- cohol, a soaring mid- palate, and a finish that lasts over 60 sec- onds,	this is a wine of compelling poten- tial. Anticipated maturity: 2010- 2030+.

Using as a starting point the schematic argumentative structure that was deduced in section 6.1, figure 6:6 illustrates how the production-related, the descriptive-evaluative and the consumption-oriented units can be interpreted as main arguments in favour of a normative standpoint which in turn functions as support for a prescriptive standpoint.



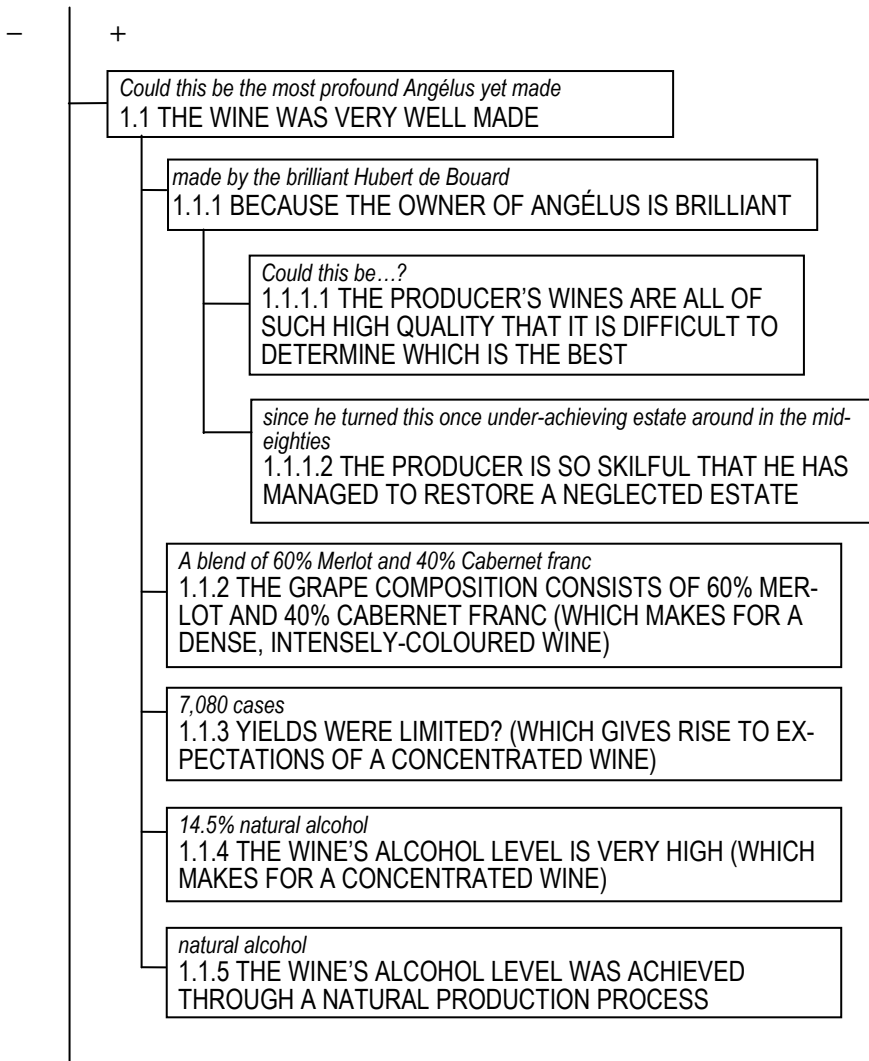


**Figure 6:6 Double standpoints and main arguments in the review of Angélus 2005**

Although I have understood the Angélus review to reveal the same basic argumentative organization as the Bon Pasteur text, the standpoints and arguments have been reconstructed into argumentative propositions using slightly different wordings. As indicated in the figure above, the normative standpoint 1b has been elucidated on the basis of the expression *Could this be the most profound Angelus yet made*, and the numerical score (96-98+) has been taken to express the subordinate normative standpoint 1b-1. This normative position is understood to underpin the prescriptive standpoint, which has been arrived at by transferring what is taken to be an implicit directive *Anticipated maturity 2010-2030+* into an imperative construction, i.e. 1a OBTAIN ANGÉLUS 2005. In view of the vigour with which the normative standpoint is pronounced, it would perhaps be justified to capture the prescriptive standpoint by means of a more forceful expression, e.g. DO OBTAIN ANGÉLUS 2005.

According to the proposal presented in figure 6:6, three main arguments are given in support of the standpoints. The reconstructions of these are presented in the boxes of the figure.

Using the transformation operations of pragma-dialectics, I will now abstract the possible argumentative skeleton of each of the main arguments. In addition to the structure of the argumentation, the schemes and topoi on which the arguments are based are also discussed. The figure below demonstrates the argumentative organization of the production-related argumentation of the Angélu review.



**Figure 6:7** Argumentative organization of the production-related unit of the Angélu review

The transformation operations of pragma-dialectics are useful for showing that, although the formulations differ, the basic structure of the Angélu review can be understood to be fairly similar to that of the Bon Pasteur text, at least on the first- and second-order levels. The operation of substitution allows the expression *the most profound Angelus yet made* to be recast into the argumentative proposition +1.1 THE WINE WAS VERY WELL MADE. Furthermore, the high praise of the producer (*the brilliant Hubert de Bouard*) has been understood to be connected with the high quality that the wine is found to have, either based on symptomatic reasoning or argumentation from cause and effect, or perhaps on a combination of these two patterns, where symptomatic argumentation is drawn on in this particular case to invoke a more general argument scheme of cause and effect. In contrast to the Bon Pasteur review, where a zeugmatic construction imposed a connection between the wine makers' competence and the resulting wine, such cues are missing in the Angélu text. Despite the absence of such overt indicators, the link between the wine and the praised producer has nevertheless been taken to be sufficient for the reconstruction of the second-order argument +1.1.1 BECAUSE THE OWNER OF ANGÉLU IS BRILLIANT. Cues from other texts in the data set provide further support in favour of the idea that, although this is not explicitly indicated, the producer's capacity and the resulting quality of the wine are argumentatively linked together as cause and effect. The following formulations taken from other corpus reviews are suggestive of this idea:

- (6:2) This estate is finally making a qualitative comeback now that Stephane Deroncourt is consulting
- (6:3) Owned by Michel Querre, who has accomplished terrific things at his small Pomerol estate, the 2005 d'Aiguilhe Querre [...] boasts super intensity...
- (6:4) The finest Certan de May in many years (thanks to the intervention of famed wine consultant Michel Rolland)...

+1.1.1 BECAUSE THE OWNER OF ANGÉLU IS BRILLIANT has been understood to be underscored by two supportive arguments: First, the question format of the initial evaluation of the wine evokes the idea that the producer has made so many profound wines that it cannot be univocally determined which one of them is the best, a suggestion which reinforces the idea that this producer is very competent. The superlative formulation invokes a comparison with other profound wines from this estate, implying that such a comparison is significant for the purported audience. This feature of Parker's argumentation is of importance for the construction of the writer's as well as the audience's identity. The dialogistic significance of the question format whereby this argument is presented will be further discussed in the next chapter. Second, the

formulation *since he turned this once under-achieving estate around in the mid-eighties* is taken to provide further support for +1.1.1. By means of substitution, this formulation has been reconstructed as the argumentative proposition +1.1.1.2 THE PRODUCER IS SO SKILFUL THAT HE HAS MANAGED TO RESTORE A NEGLECTED ESTATE. This argument, which is given in support of the proposition about the producer's capacity, is based on generally accessible evidence: Other sources confirm that Hubert de Boüard has been responsible for a number of changes at Angélu, which led to the upgrading of the estate from "Grand Cru Classé" to "Premier Grand Cru Classé B" in the St Émilion classification of 1996.<sup>107</sup> As pointed out in chapter 5, evidence based on external sources is a conspicuous feature of the production-related unit of Parker's reviews. This aspect of his argumentation construes the audience as a reasonable group seeking verifiable evidence in order to be convinced.

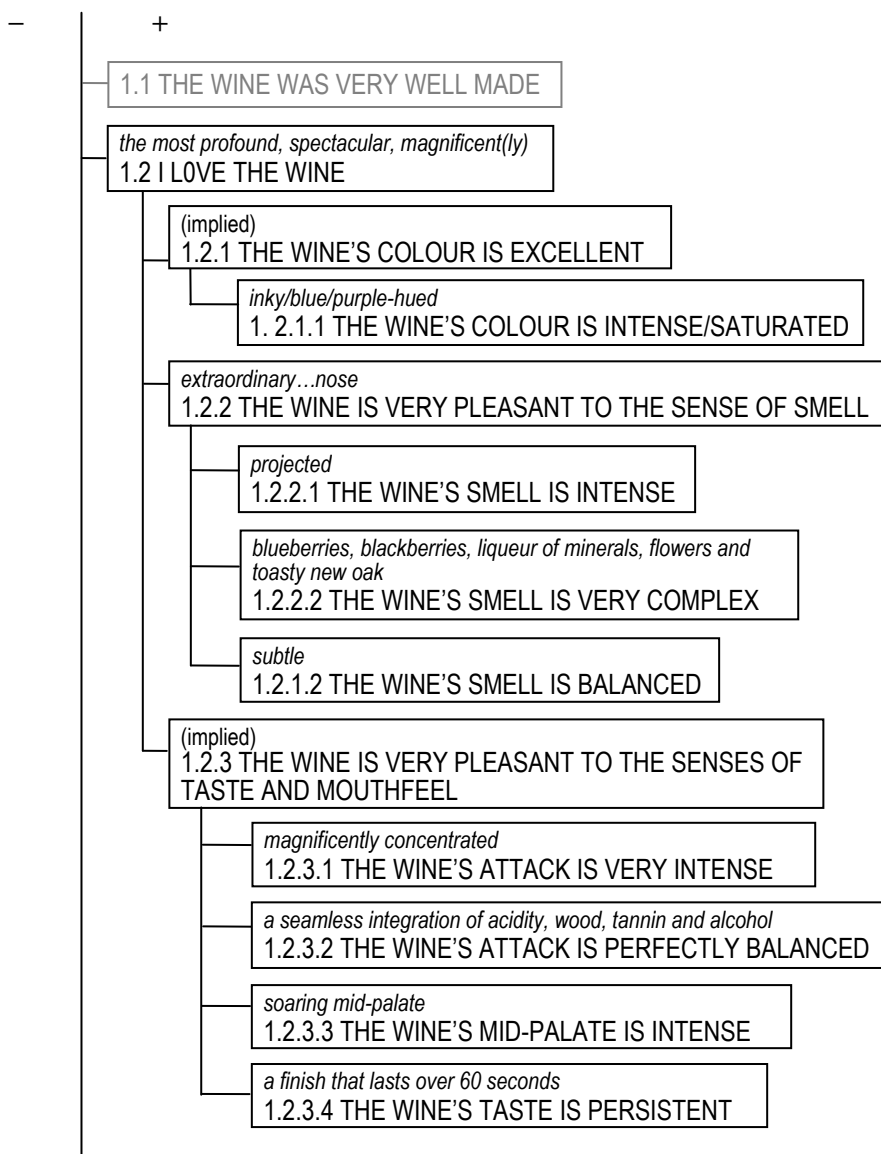
In the argumentation analysis of the Angélu review, several arguments have been listed as subordinate of +1.1 THE WINE WAS VERY WELL MADE. From the point of view of the production-oriented thematic unit, the technical data that is provided about the wine does not have a clearly argumentative function. Instead, the specification of grape composition, alcohol level and number of cases appear superficially to be designed to impart completely objective knowledge about this wine's production. The information given can be verified through recourse to sources that are external to the writer. The fact that these items are presented nevertheless serves the purpose of construing the writer and the audience as belonging to a group of wine consumers who pay attention to such details, thus also providing the requisites for the audience to be persuaded on their own terms on the basis of the available evidence of the worthiness of this wine. However, while ostensibly objective, the selection of data nonetheless has the argumentative function of guiding the audience's attention towards this particular technical information as relevant for the high quality of the resulting wine. In that sense, the text's argumentativity can be said to lie in the presence of these particular details and the absence of others. Other aspects, such as the importance of the estate's location and traditions, which could have been brought into the argumentation, are thereby left absent. This results in a particular reflection of reality, i.e. a deflection of the local notion of terroir. In terms of argumentative organization, it is worth observing that it would also be possible to regard +1.1.2–1.1.5 as substantiation of +1.1.1. This is because the technical details that are listed can be seen as related to the producer's choices during the making of the wine and can in that sense be seen as reflections of de Boüard's competence. As will become clear in the argumentation analysis of

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<sup>107</sup> See for instance this site <http://www.thewinedoctor.com/bordeaux/angelus.shtml> for detailed information about the development of Château Angélu. Date of access 21 July 2011. It is worth observing that the oenologist Michel Rolland functions as a consultant for the wine production at Château Angélu as well as the higher-ranked St Émilion estate Château Ausone (which received 100 points in the 2006 issue of *The Wine Advocate*) (Asimov 2006).

the description of the wine tasting experience, which is undertaken below, there is a potential relation between the selection of technical data presented in the production-related unit and the aspects of the wine tasting experience that are highlighted in the descriptive-evaluative unit.

The figure below displays the argumentation that the descriptive-evaluative unit has been understood to instantiate:



**Figure 6:8** Argumentative organization of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Angéhus review

On a par with the second primary argument in the Bon Pasteur review above, +1.2 I LOVE THE WINE has also been reconstructed on the basis of qualities that are attributed to the wine: *the most profound, spectacular*. Furthermore, I have listed *magnificent(ly)* as a possible instantiation of +1.2. It can of course be debated whether the item *magnificently* really constitutes an explicit realization of +1.2, since its main function is to intensify *concentrated* (a third-order pro-argument which will be discussed below). Martin & White (2005:143) note that when intensification is performed by isolated lexical modifiers, as in the case of *magnificently*, these items may no longer carry their full semantic load, i.e. they may become ‘delexicalised’ when used in certain constructions. On this view, *magnificently concentrated* would have almost the same meaning as *extremely concentrated*. However, *magnificently* in the present formulation has been understood to provide the expression with a positive emotional charge that would not to the same extent be conveyed by *extremely*, which is why *magnificent(ly)* has been understood to partially contribute to the realization of +1.2. The transformation operations of substitution and permutation have been employed in the reconstruction of +1.2. In terms of argument schemes, I note that while argumentation from ethos is employed in the Angélus text, relying on the audience’s inclination to share the writer’s emotional reaction towards this wine, associative argumentation is not drawn on to corroborate the emotional response.

+1.2 I LOVE THE WINE is substantiated by a number of sub-ordinate arguments which are based on the writer’s perceptual experiences during the tasting event, i.e. as pointed out in section 5.3.3, the claims made in the descriptive-evaluative unit are not verifiable through external sources. The first of these relates to the visual impression of the wine. The argument has been reconstructed as +1.2.1 THE WINE’S COLOUR IS EXCELLENT. This claim is however left implicit and instantiated at the sub-ordinate level +1.2.1.1, where a characterization of the wine’s colour indicates that it is saturated: Based on world knowledge about the average colour of red wine, readers are invited to conclude that the description *inky/blue/purple-hued* implies intensity/saturation, almost to the point of opaqueness, although this is not explicitly stated. The colour of the wine is made present in the descriptive-evaluative units of about half of the corpus reviews (104/200, see table 5:4). As already observed in section 5.3.3, only two of the data set reviews involve descriptions of light-coloured wines. In all the other instances, it is a deep, saturated colour that is depicted by the text. The following examples provide further illustrations of this phenomenon:

(6:5) Its inky/blue/purple color...

(6:6) ...the profound 2003 Branaire Ducru boasts a saturated plum/purple color...

(6:7) A dense viscous-looking purple color...

(6:8) Its dense black colour...

(6:9) A midnight black colour

The five wines targeted by these colour descriptions have all received numerical ratings of 95 or higher, which is taken as an indication that descriptions of a dark colour have the argumentative significance of enhancing the plausibility of the standpoints, i.e. in this case that the wine is of extremely high quality and should be obtained. This is taken to justify the addition of +1.2.1 THE WINE'S COLOUR IS EXCELLENT although no explicit evaluations to this effect are being issued. Instead it is left up to the audience to infer this second-order evaluative proposition on the basis of the writer's descriptive testimony.

In accordance with the stages in the wine tasting ritual, the depiction of the visual impression of the wine is followed by a description of the olfactory experience of the wine's aromatics. As indicated in figure 6:8, I have taken the expression *extraordinary...nose* to instantiate the argument +1.2.2. THE WINE IS VERY PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF SMELL. By means of permutation, the item *projected* is extracted from this formulation and reconstructed as a subordinate argument +1.2.2.1 THE WINE'S SMELL IS INTENSE.<sup>108</sup> Just like *jump* in the Bon Pasteur text above, *projected* can also be understood to refer to Force as well as Speed.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, the string of olfactory descriptors *blueberries, blackberries, liqueur of minerals, flowers and...toasty oak* have been reconstructed as +1.2.2.2 THE WINE'S SMELL IS VERY COMPLEX. Comparing this enumeration of aroma components to the list given in the Bon Pasteur review, it is clear that the description in the Angéus text suggests a higher degree of complexity and so presumably a stronger argument, since the aroma components mentioned here are more numerous. Furthermore, an possible additional third-order sub-argument, +1.2.2.3 THE WINE'S SMELL IS BALANCED, is introduced by means of the item *subtle*, which I have taken to indicate that the bouquet of toasty oak is included in the complexity of the wine's aromatics, but not allowed to overwhelm the other fragrances.<sup>110</sup>

The next step in the wine tasting ritual concerns the perceptual experience of the wine's taste and mouthfeel. There is no explicit realization of the claim

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<sup>108</sup> The transformation of the formulation *projected* into the argumentative proposition THE WINE'S SMELL IS INTENSE is based on the following meaning of *project* listed in The Free Dictionary: 'to thrust outward or forward'. There is no listing of this term in Parker's glossary of wine terms.

<sup>109</sup> Caballero's (2007) investigation is delimited to manner-of-motion verbs in wine tasting notes. My interpretation of Parker's reviews suggests that the notions of +/- Speed and +/- Force can be extended to incorporate other expressions than manner-of-motion verbs.

<sup>110</sup> *Subtle* could also be interpreted as an instantiation of +1.2 depending on the meaning that the term is taken to convey here.

that I have reconstructed as +1.2.3 THE WINE IS VERY PLEASANT TO THE SENSES OF TASTE AND MOUTHFEEL. The addition of this argumentative proposition is nevertheless justified on the basis of the subordinate argumentation given in support of this claim. These third-order arguments are arranged in accordance with the writer's gustatory experiences of the wine, the first two referring to the wine's 'attack' or first impact in the mouth. The first of these, +1.2.3.1 THE WINE'S ATTACK IS VERY INTENSE has been reconstructed as a substitution for the formulation *magnificently concentrated*, and the second, +1.2.3.2 THE WINE'S ATTACK IS PERFECTLY BALANCED, has been arrived at through transformation of the formulation *a seamless integration of acidity, wood, tannin and alcohol*. In contrast to the aroma components of the wine's smell, which were discussed above, the list of acidity, wood, tannin and alcohol is not interpreted as an indication of complexity of the wine's palate. The justification for this is that these components are more or less present in all wines, and the list in itself therefore does not constitute an argument that would enhance the plausibility of the standpoints. The argument is instead understood to highlight the fact that all these components are present to the desired degree, which results in the wine's attack being balanced. The next third-order argument substantiating +1.2.3 refers to the next gustatory stage, the mid-palate, which follows the wine's attack. +1.2.3.3 entails the claim THE WINE'S MID-PALATE IS INTENSE, a proposition which has been reconstructed on the basis of the formulation *soaring mid-palate*.<sup>111</sup> Finally, +1.2.3.4 relates to the last stage in the wine tasting ritual: the wine's finish, i.e. how it vaporizes. This final third-order argument given in support of +1.2.3 amounts to the proposition +1.2.3.4 THE WINE'S TASTE IS PERSISTENT. The formulation on which this reconstruction is based is *it lasts over 60 seconds*. The positive argumentative drift of this expression is signalled by the item *over*, which guides the audience towards the idea that this is a considerable time span in the context of a wine's finish. In addition, based on their world knowledge of the normal persistence of a wine's finish, even without the addition of *over*, initiate readers can also infer that the vaporization time specified in the Angélus review is to be regarded as extensive.

The presentational technique employed by Parker in the Angélus review construes a link between the producer's choices during the production of this wine and the extremely enjoyable experience of tasting it: The zeugmatic construction that ties the production-related unit to the descriptive-evaluative unit in the surface form of the text suggests a connection between the combination of grape types and the perceptual experience: *A blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc, the spectacular, inky/blue/purple-hued 2005...* Furthermore,

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<sup>111</sup> *Soaring* is not among the terms listed in Parker's glossary of wine terminology. The following definition of the meaning of the term *soaring* that has been understood to be relevant in the present context is given by The Free Dictionary: 'greater than normal in degree or intensity or amount'.



the parenthetical insertion of seemingly completely objective, verifiable data about the wine (*7,080 cases; 14.5% natural alcohol*) in the descriptive-evaluative unit, which is otherwise based on evidence arrived at by means of sensory experiences, could be taken to imply that the size of the production, the yields, as well of the level of alcohol is of importance for the pleasure that is experienced when tasting the wine. The analysis of Parker's argumentation in the Angélus review demonstrates how an intense, concentrated wine is promoted by the text. The rhetorical importance of the textual arrangement, which weaves together descriptions of perceptual experiences with enumerations of technical details, will be further discussed in the next chapter (see section 7.2.2).

As a final comment on the argumentative organization of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Angélus review, the expression *Anticipated maturity: 2010-* indicates that the wine was not fully mature when tasted in 2006, which could be taken to decrease the value of the aesthetic experience. There are however no verbal cues in the Angélus text that can be taken as justification for a reconstruction of this formulation as a type of counter-argument. Evidence from other corpus texts is suggestive of the idea that the time specification may possibly be understood as a potential problem from the perspective of the present sensory experience. The potentially negative argumentative significance is illustrated by the following comment about the need of storage of the 2003 Ausone.<sup>112</sup>

(6:10) Prospective purchasers should be aware that Ausone requires 10-20 years of cellaring before it approaches maturity.

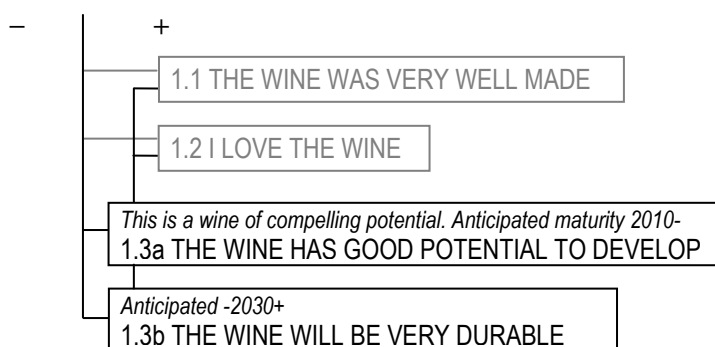
The possible deficits of the present aesthetic experience do however not seem to decrease the degree to which the normative standpoint is intended to apply. Although the Ausone 2003 presumably displayed clear lack of maturity at the specific tasting event, the wine has been granted with the highest numerical score: 100 Parker points. I am therefore reluctant to regard references to the wines' need of storage as counter-arguments in the argumentative structure substantiating the normative standpoint. Rather, comments about the wines' need of cellaring function to define the group of consumers to which the argumentation is directed as patient wine aficionados equipped with a wine cellar, which is why this type of comment has been seen as a partial instantiation of the prescriptive standpoint rather than having any other argumentative function.

Let us now move on to the consumption-oriented unit of the Angélus review. As pointed out above in the analysis of the corresponding unit of the Bon

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<sup>112</sup> I observe in passing that Château Ausone has the official rank of "Premier Grand Cru Classé A", which, together with Château Cheval Blanc, makes it the most prestigious wine in the St Émilion district.

Pasteur review, it can be debated whether the information concerning the wine's potential to develop and age should also be regarded as an argument in addition to the function of instantiating the prescriptive standpoint. I have nevertheless chosen to include it as part of the review's purported argumentative hierarchy. The figure below presents a possible argumentative reconstruction of the Angélu review's consumption-oriented unit:



**Figure 6:9 Argumentative organization of the consumption-oriented unit of the Angélu review**

The outline in figure 6:9 suggests that the consumption-oriented unit of the Angélu review has the same coordinative argumentative pattern as the Bon Pasteur review. As indicated by the wording by means of which the propositions +1.3a and +1.3b are captured, Angélu's consumption-oriented formulations involve an upgrading of the degree compared to Bon Pasteur. First, the time specifications themselves can be taken to entail a stronger claim with respect to the assessment of this wine compared to Bon Pasteur. The formulation *Anticipated maturity: 2010-* suggests the potential to develop for four years rather than 1-2.<sup>113</sup> Similarly, +1.3b THE WINE WILL BE VERY DURABLE, which has been reconstructed on the basis of the expression *Anticipated maturity: -2030+*, can be understood to involve a stronger assertion with respect to the general topos 'That which is durable is better than that which is transitory'. In addition, the expression *compelling potential* and + in *2030+* can be seen as textual cues inviting an argumentative reading. The idea that the drink time specification can indeed be seen as significant with respect to the plausibility of the standpoints is further supported by evidence from other data set reviews. In the consumption-oriented unit of the review of Château Ausone 2003, for instance, the following comment is added:

<sup>113</sup> It should be pointed out that while the Bon Pasteur review deals with a wine from 2003, the Angélu text refers to a wine from 2005, which partially explains the difference in potential to evolve.

(6:11) It should last for 70-100 years. It is a wine for anthology!

In the Ausone text, the addition of the positively oriented comment *wine for anthology* followed by the exclamation mark can be taken as an indication that the durability of the wine is to be seen as an aspect that contributes to its qualitative worth, which is why the indication of extensive durability can be understood to reinforce the plausibility of the normative standpoint. As already observed, an important aspect of the credibility of the predictions presented in the reviews is Parker's longstanding experience and extraordinary memory for olfactory and gustatory perception. Verbal indications as to the fact that the perceptual memory of other wines functions to provide evidence are however only rarely given in the text itself. The argument scheme of analogy on which the prediction is based therefore has to be inferred by the audience based on their knowledge about Parker's abilities and experience as it is presented in other sources. The following comment about Château Ausone 2003 does however involve an explicit introduction of this evidential setting into the argumentation:

(6:12) ...even after tasting a quarter million [wines] and twenty-six years on the road, it still gave me chills.<sup>114</sup>

This completes the argumentation analysis of the Angélu review. The discussion has involved a comparison with the Bon Pasteur review, which was scrutinized in section 6.2.1. It has been shown that the two reviews follow a similar argumentative pattern, although more numerous and forceful arguments are given in support of the normative standpoint of the Angélu review, which involves a more positive evaluation. At the same time, it is noteworthy that the review text gives a particular reflection of which aspects should be associated with a wine of high quality. There is for instance a disregard of factors that contribute to this wine's particular personality in relation to other complex, hyper-concentrated wines, for instance whether Angélu may perhaps go particularly well with certain, perhaps local, dishes.

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<sup>114</sup> This comment is not taken from the Ausone 2003 review of *The Wine Advocate* 2006 issue that is included in the corpus, but from a review of the same wine published in the April 2005 issue.

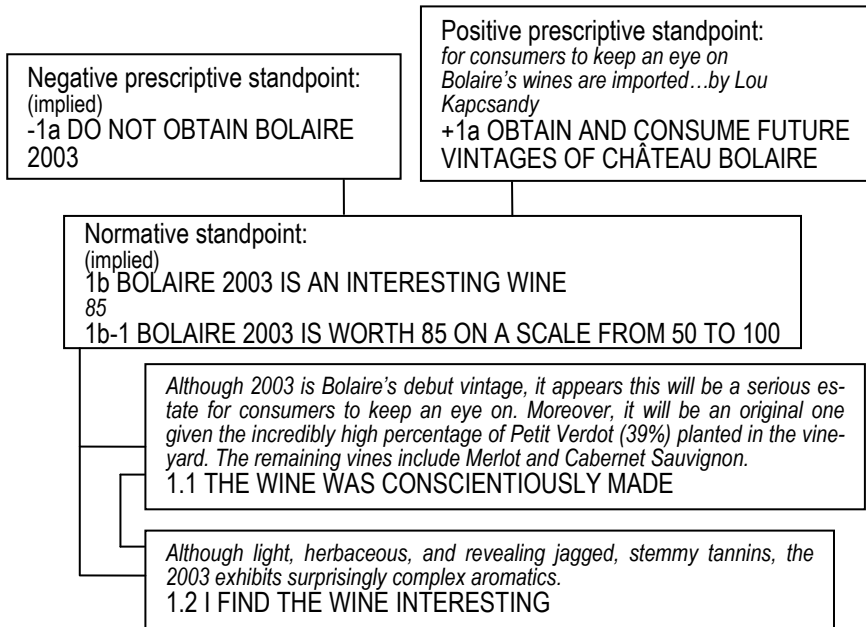
### 6.2.3 CHÂTEAU BOLAIRE 2003

I now move on to consider the argumentative organization of the review of Château Bolaire. With a numerical score of 85 Parker points, the Bolaire review entails attenuation in comparison with the two preceding texts, the Bon Pasteur and Angélus reviews, providing the possibility to explore the argumentative organization of a tasting note referring to a wine that has inspired a comparatively low degree of appreciation. The table below displays the thematic units of the Bolaire review:

**Table 6:3 Thematic units in the review of Bolaire 2003**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSUMPTION
2003 Bolaire A Bordeaux blend dry table wine from Bor- deaux Supérieur, Bor- deaux, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: 85 Drink: 2007-2013 Cost: \$20 (25)	Although 2003 is Bo- laire's debut vintage, it appears this will be a serious estate for consumers to keep an eye on. Moreover, it will be an original one given the incredi- bly high percentage of Petit Verdot (39%) planted in the vine- yard. The remaining vines include Merlot and Cabernet Sauvi- gnon.	Although light, her- baceous, and reveal- ing jagged, stemmy tannins, the 2003 ex- hibits surprisingly complex aromatics.	Anticipated matur- ity: 2007-2013. Bolaire's wines are imported exclu- sively by Lou Kapcsandy.

Employing the division into thematic units as a starting point, figure 6:10 below exhibits the overall argumentative organization of main arguments in the Bolaire review as it has been elucidated by the argumentation analysis:

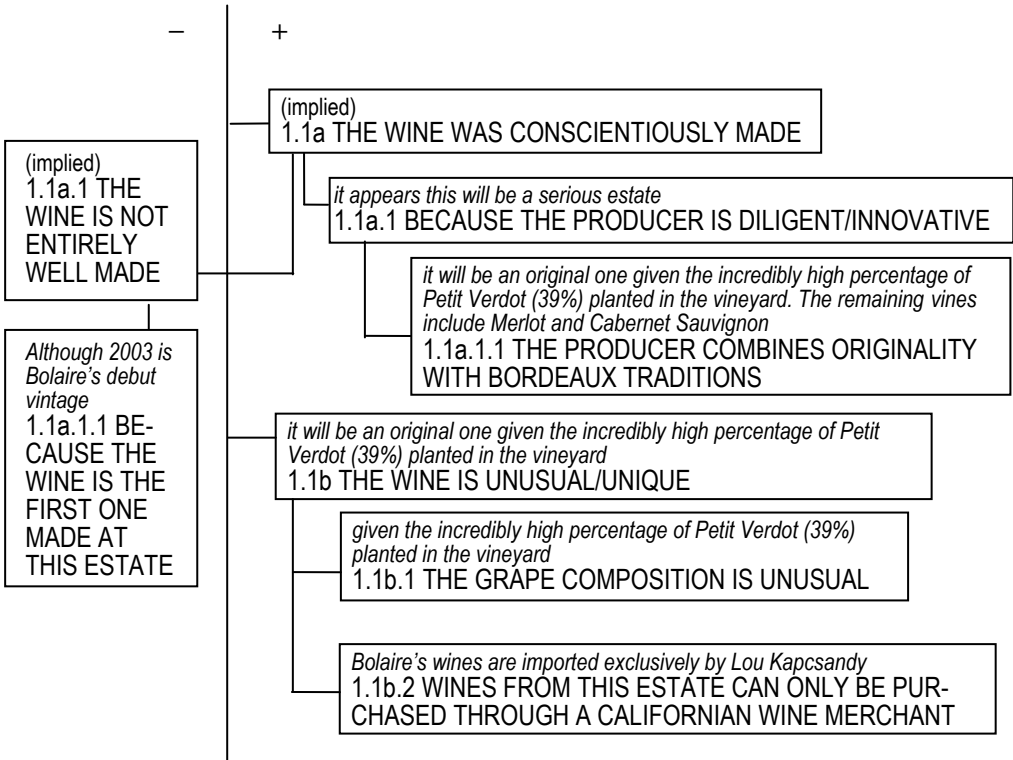


**Figure 6:10 Standpoints and main arguments in the review of BOLAIRE 2003**

A numerical score of 85 points can be said to represent the pivotal point between positive and negative in the context of Parker's wine writing. Rather than being explicitly stated in the text, the superordinate normative standpoint 1b has been understood to amount to the following claim: BOLAIRE 2003 IS AN INTERESTING WINE. The prescriptive message to the purported audience is not univocally that they should drink this wine, but rather that they should perhaps drink future vintages from this estate. This recommendation is alluded to by means of the indirect formulation *for consumers to keep an eye on* as well as the information that the wine is imported by Lou Kapcsandy. The prescriptive interpretation of the formulation *Anticipated maturity*, which was noted in the analysis of the Angélus review above, is less immediately accessible in the BOLAIRE review, since the argumentation in fact seems to amount to the idea that the addressee should not obtain this particular wine, but possibly future vintages from the same estate. Perhaps it can still be understood as a recommendation to those consumers who, just like Parker, are on the lookout for up-and-coming wine estates to give this wine a try but not expect too much. The specification of the wine's potential to evolve and age as rather limited can possibly also be regarded as support for the idea that the wine's qualitative worth is merely 85. Since the argumentative potential of the expression *Anticipated maturity 2007-2013* can be understood to be relatively limited, it has not been included in figure 6:10. Nonetheless, the expression could also be regarded as a

cautious incentive to the open-minded consumer who appreciates attempts at inventiveness in wine making.

Figure 6:11 below presents a possible reconstruction of the argumentative hierarchy of the production-related unit of the Bolaire review:



**Figure 6:11 Argumentative organization of the production-related unit of the Bolaire review**

Although our world knowledge tells us that the production-related unit refers to events that must have taken place in the past with respect to the moment of speaking (see section 5.3.2), the formulations used by the writer turns attention away from the past situation, a phenomenon that is achieved by means of grammatical constructions as well as word choice. By locating the production-related unit in a future time of possibility (*it appears this will be a serious estate, it will be an original one*) rather than in a past time of certainty, the use of grammatical markers of future time can be said to divert the reader's attention from the production of this particular wine. Instead, attention is directed towards what may come to be achieved at this estate in the future. Similarly, the

grape composition that this wine is made from is not defined as a *blend* (see the Angélu review in section 6.2.2), which would bring to mind a phase of the production process located in the past with respect to the moment of tasting. By referring to the grapes as *vines* instead, the writer introduces the idea of potential future harvests from this vineyard instead of grapes already harvested. Furthermore, the item *debut vintage* suggests that no evidence based on this estate's prior production is available to the writer.

The analysis of the overall argumentative organization of the production-related unit (see figure 6:11), shows that it builds on a series of coordinated arguments, a reconstruction which is cued by the item *moreover* (see van Eemeren et al. 2002:64–65). This argumentative feature makes the Bolaire review distinct from the Bon Pasteur and Angélu reviews, which were analyzed above. The coordinative linking of arguments suggests that the writer has found it necessary to present more numerous arguments, possibly because each of the arguments is considered too weak to stand alone in support of the standpoints. The introduction of the Californian wine maker and importer Lou Kapcsándy, in addition to being a partial instantiation of the prescriptive standpoint (see figure 6:10), could perhaps also be seen as a need felt by the writer to bring into the colloquy another authority besides himself to guarantee the noteworthiness of this wine.<sup>115</sup> However, examination of other corpus texts shows that it is unusual for Parker to introduce other expert opinions alongside his own. This reconstruction is therefore perhaps not entirely successful and has not been included in figure 6:11.

The text is initiated by a concessive connective (*although*), which presents the first clause as a counter-argument. The formulation *although this is Bolaire's debut vintage* relies on the implicit premise that the quality of an estate's wine is usually not high during the first year of production, i.e. the reasoning is based on symptomatic argumentation along the following lines: "It is typical of debut vintages that the wine quality is not very high". This formulation has led to the reconstruction of two arguments (-1.1a.1 and -1.1a.1.1), which are connected to one another through subordinative linking. As noted above in the analysis of the previous reviews, the argument scheme invoked here could also be understood to contribute to a more general pattern involving argumentation of cause and effect, linking the producer's capacity to the quality of the wine: "The producer's lack of sufficient competence due to inexperience has the inevitable effect that the resulting wine is not of high quality".

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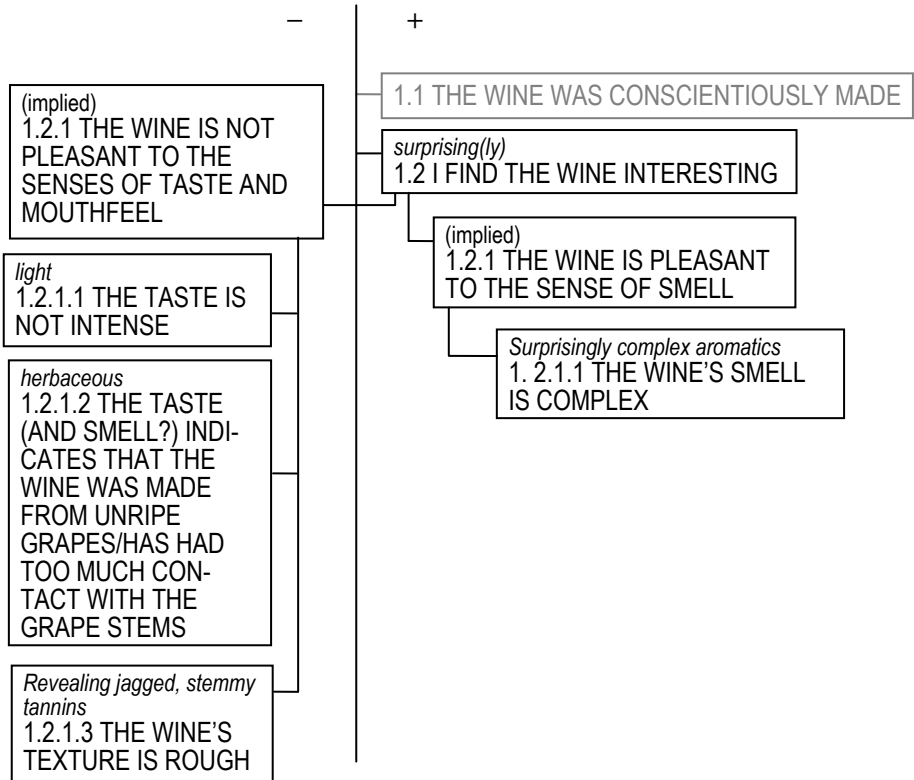
<sup>115</sup> Lou Kapcsándy is a well known wine importer and also the owner of a Napa Valley vineyard and winery. For information about Kapcsándy, see for instance this website, <http://www.napawineproject.com/Napa-Wineries/?id=627>, or the official homepage of the Kapcsandy Family winery available at <http://www.kapcsandywines.com/index.cfm?method=homepage.showpage>. Both sites were accessed on 6 October 2011.

The formulation *serious estate* has however been deemed to imply the positively oriented idea that is reconstructed as +1.1a THE WINE WAS CONSCIENTIOUSLY MADE. The formulation *serious estate* is also taken to provide the basis for the reconstruction of the subordinate argument +1.1a.1 THE PRODUCER IS DILIGENT/INNOVATIVE. It is worth observing that the expression used does not evoke a particular person as responsible for the production, which was the case in the two preceding reviews, but the capacity is transferred from the people that are responsible for the activity at the estate to the estate itself. This will be further discussed in chapter 7, where the importance of stylistic choices is in focus. As pointed out above, the item *moreover*, which initiates the next clause, has been taken as a cue signalling multiple argumentation. The idea that *it will be an original one given the incredibly high percentage of Petit Verdot (39%)* is therefore taken to amount to the independent argument +1.1b THE WINE IS UNUSUAL/UNIQUE. with the subordinate argument +1.1b.1 THE GRAPE COMPOSITION IS UNUSUAL. In order for this formulation to be interpreted as argumentative, recourse can be made to the general topos ‘That which is unique is preferable to that which is abundantly available’, which is taken to underlie the reasoning. Furthermore, the formulation *it will be an original one given the incredibly high percentage of Petit Verdot (39%) planted in the vintage* can also be seen as supporting the argument +1.1a.1 THE PRODUCER IS INNOVATIVE: Petit Verdot is a grape variety that produces deep-coloured wines which are high in tannin and alcohol. The cultivation of Petit Verdot in the Bordeaux region can however be hazardous, since these grapes often ripen too late due to the changeable French climate (Spurrier & Dovaz 1990). While reconstructed as an independent argument pertaining to the wine’s uniqueness, i.e. +1.1b with subordinate argument +1.1b.1, the formulation is simultaneously regarded as making up part of +1.1a1.1, which on the basis of this formulation and the following reference to the other grape types, i.e. *the remaining vines include Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon*, could possibly be taken to make up the argumentative proposition THE PRODUCER COMBINES ORIGINALITY WITH BORDEAUX TRADITIONS. Interpreted in this way, this argumentation adds up to the idea that BOLAIRE’s producer is confident enough to take chances in order to produce a blend that stands out from the rest. The argumentative potential of the formulation *BOLAIRE’s wines are imported exclusively by Lou Kapcsandy* has already been touched on above. In addition to its function as a possible realization of the positively oriented prescriptive standpoint directed to a group of consumers who are curious about new Bordeaux estates, the item *exclusively* draws attention to another meaning facet of the formulation, which justifies the reconstruction of the argumentative proposition +1.1b.2 WINES FROM THIS ESTATE CAN ONLY BE PURCHASED THROUGH A CALIFORNIAN WINE MERCHANT. This argument is seen as supporting the superordinate argument of uniqueness, implying the following suggestion: If you manage to obtain this



wine, you are in the possession of an unusual rarity since Lou Kapcsandy is the sole American importer.

I will now attend to the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bolaire review, which was reconstructed as the argumentative proposition +1.2 I FIND THE WINE INTERESTING in figure 6:10. The argumentation analysis of this thematic unit is presented in the figure below:



**Figure 6:12** Argumentative organization of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bolaire review

It is worth observing that the order of the wine tasting event is not adhered to in this text. Instead, the element that is introduced first in the surface form of the descriptive-evaluative unit (*light*) has been understood to refer to the gustatory experience of the wine. This will be further discussed in section 7.2.3, where the style and arrangement of this text is the focus of attention. Furthermore, the formulation *surprisingly* has been taken as point of departure for the reconstruction of +1.2 I FIND THE WINE INTERESTING, a primary argument on

the plus side. This argumentative proposition has been arrived at by means of substitution, permutation and addition of the experiencer, a conscious human participant that is left implicit in the original formulation. The primary, positively oriented, argument is supported by a secondary argument, which is implied by the description of the wine's aromatics: +1.2.1 THE WINE IS PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF SMELL. In support of this argument, the formulation *surprisingly complex aromatics* has been reconstructed as +1.2.1.1 THE WINE'S SMELL IS COMPLEX. I note in passing that the argumentation scheme referred to as 'division argument', which was employed in the preceding reviews to emphasize the presence of the aroma components, is missing in the description of Bolaire's aromatics. The rhetorical potential of such choices will be further expounded in chapter 7. The rest of the descriptive-evaluative unit presents negative argumentation playing down the experience that this wine gives rise to. First, as indicated above, the item *light*, since taken to refer to the lack of intensity of the wine's taste, has been reconstructed as the proposition -1.2.1.1 THE TASTE IS NOT INTENSE. There is nothing inherently negative about the formulation *light* when used as a wine descriptor.<sup>116</sup> However, the concessive connective *although*, which precedes *light* in the surface structure, invites a negative interpretation in this case. Furthermore, given that it occurs in a string of negative evaluations, *herbaceous* has been taken to be a synonym of 'green', 'leafy' or 'vegetal', which can be used to indicate an unpleasantness of the perceptual experience that is the result of lack of ripeness of the grapes from which the wine was made or of too much contact with the grape stems.<sup>117</sup> From the perspective of the intended audience of wine consumers, the item has been understood to instantiate the argument -1.2.1.2, thus targeting a deficit in the perceptual experience during the tasting event. In addition, from the perspective of the actual audience, which potentially includes the producer of this wine, *herbaceous* can also be understood as criticism of specific unsuccessful choices that, due to the producer's inexperience (*debut vintage*), were made during the production process. Similarly, *jagged, stemmy tannins*, while reconstructed as -1.2.1.3 THE WINE'S TEXTURE IS ROUGH from the point of view of the description of the perceptual event, can also be taken to refer back to aspects of the production process that are being criticized indirectly, namely that the wine has had too much contact with the grape stems

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<sup>116</sup> The term *light* is not listed in The Wine Advocate's glossary of wine terms (*The Wine Advocate. A glossary of wine terms*). According to Hawkins' (1995) wine glossary, *light* may be used as a polite expression meaning "watery". Johnson (2005:238) however uses the term *light* in a positive sense when referring to Bordeaux wines: "...this is the only region in the world... whose genius lies in making great light wine – light on the palate, light on the spirits, light on the constitution...".

<sup>117</sup> In Parker's glossary of wine terminology (*The Wine Advocate. A glossary of wine terms*) *herbaceous* is defined as a neutral descriptor referring to the smell of herbes de Provence in a wine's aromatics. Furthermore, according to Hawkins' (1995) wine glossary, all of the terms *herbaceous*, *leafy* and *vegetal* can be used in a positive sense to describe characteristics of the aroma of the grape variety, for instance the Cabernet Sauvignon grape.

or was not allowed to ripen appropriately. This close analysis of the text shows that there appears to be an intricate argumentative interplay between the production-related and the descriptive-evaluative units: As pointed out above, the production-related unit of the Bolaire review evokes future vintages of this wine rather than being oriented towards judgement of what was done in the past, which is signalled through the use of tense (it appears this *will be* a serious estate) as well as word choice (*vines* instead of *blend*). The descriptive-evaluative unit, however, in addition to portraying the here and now of the perceptual experience, can also be seen to involve indirectly expressed censure of the steps that were taken during the production of this wine, i.e. picking the grapes before they were fully ripe and leaving the stems to macerate with the grapes. From the perspective of the producer, who can be expected to be part of the actual audience, the future time orientation of the production-related unit can be interpreted as implicit encouragement to change the production process, i.e. as a type of indirectly expressed prescription as to how to act in the future in order to produce a wine that will merit a higher score.

Proceeding to the consumption-oriented unit of this review, it has already been pointed out above that it is doubtful whether the reference to the wine's drink time can be seen to have any argumentative significance. A possible argumentative interpretation would perhaps be that the specification of the wine's potential to evolve and age as rather limited is given in support of the relative weakness of the normative standpoint, in which case it should perhaps be placed on the minus side in the argumentation structure. There are however no indicators as to a possible argumentative reading of the specification of this wine's anticipated prime drinking time, which is why I have chosen not to include it in the outline of this review's argumentative organization. Nor does the expression *Anticipated maturity 2007-2013* seem to function as an instantiation of the prescriptive standpoint, which was taken to be the case with the formulation *Anticipated maturity 2010-2030+* in the review of Angélu (see figure 6:6). A possible interpretation is that readers are being dissuaded, albeit weakly, from consuming this wine, unless they, on a par with the writer, are interested in exploring the potential of a hitherto rather unknown, potentially up-and-coming, estate. For this particular group, the expression *Anticipated maturity 2007-2013* may take on the function of a recommendation to obtain Bolaire 2003.

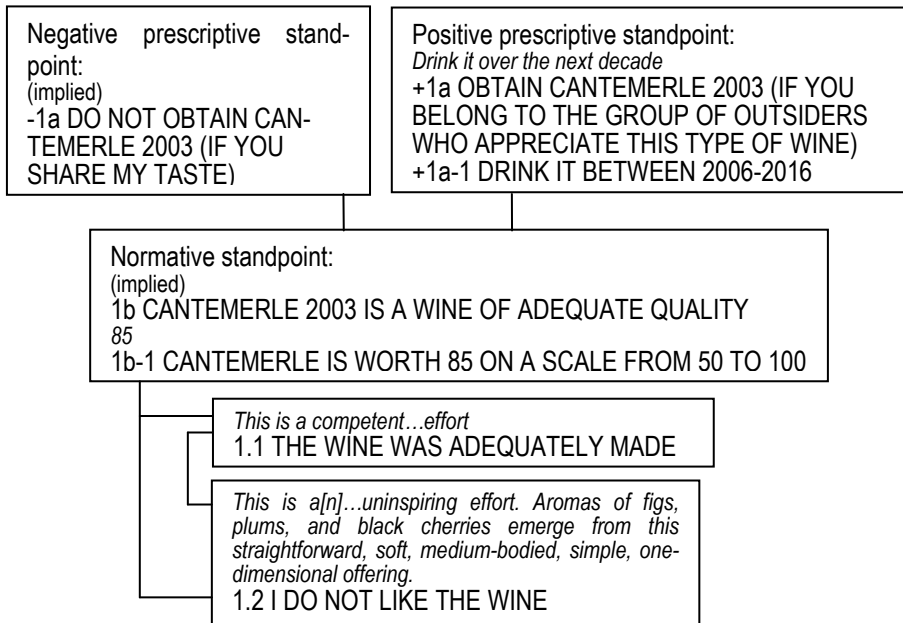
#### 6.2.4 CHÂTEAU CANTEMERLE 2003

The review of Château Cantemerle 2003 is another example of a text that does not have univocally positive orientation. Although Cantemerle 2003 has received exactly the same numerical rating as BOLAIRE 2003, it has still been considered valuable to include both of these reviews among the five texts that are selected for close scrutiny throughout this study. The justification for this is that the Cantemerle review has a different orientation than the BOLAIRE review, and it has therefore been seen to contribute to the exploration of diversity in Parker's wine writing. The inclusion of the texts with ambiguous (BOLAIRE and Cantemerle) or negative (BURGAUD) orientation, while illustrating rather unusual aspects of Parker's writing, also serves the purpose of highlighting that which is typical. The table below gives an overview of the division into thematic units of the Cantemerle review:

**Table 6:4 Thematic units in the review of Cantemerle 2003**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSUMPTION
2003 Cantemerle A Bordeaux blend dry table wine from Ma- cau, Bordeaux, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: 85 Drink: 2006-2016 Cost: \$24-\$38 (25)	This is a competent...	...but uninspiring ef- fort. Aromas of figs, plums, and black cherries emerge from this straightforward, soft, medium-bodied, simple, one- dimensional offering.	Drink it over the next decade.

Taking the division into thematic units as point of departure for the analysis, figure 6:13 shows the overall argumentative organization of this text as it has been elucidated by means of argumentation analysis:



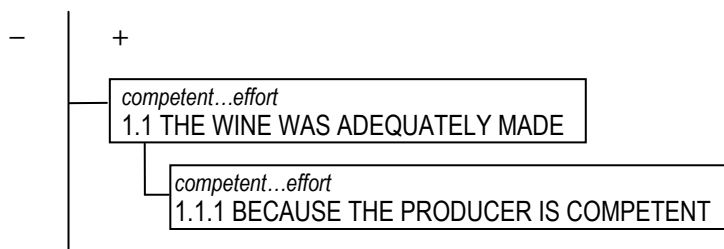
**Figure 6:13 Standpoints and main arguments in the review of Cantemerle 2003**

First, the normative standpoint 1b CANTEMERLE 2003 IS A WINE OF ADEQUATE QUALITY is not explicitly realized in the text, but has been understood to be communicated implicitly. The numerical score (85) functions to back up this embedded claim. As will become clear in the discussion below, it is problematic to abstract the prescriptive standpoint in the case of the Cantemerle review. Is consumption being recommended or not? On the one hand, the explicitly directive formulation (*Drink it over the next decade*) suggests a positively oriented recommendation, seemingly encouraging the addressee to obtain this wine in order to drink it during the proposed period. On the other, the description of the wine involves negative emotional drift in the form of the item *uninspiring*, which simultaneously functions to dissuade an addressee with the same taste as Parker from consuming this wine. The double prescriptive standpoints given in figure 6:13 above represent an attempt to capture this ambiguity: -1a DO NOT OBTAIN CANTEMERLE 2003 is designed to abstract the recommendation to a purported addressee who shares Parker's taste and who therefore will not be inspired by this wine. +1a with its subordinate standpoint +1a-1 has been reconstructed on the basis of the non-negated imperative (*Drink it...*). It is worth noting that the explicit directive in the form of an imperative construction can in fact be understood to exclude the addressor himself from the group that is being encouraged to perform the consumption (see section 5.3.4). This is not the case with the indirect recommendations featuring in the

Bon Pasteur, Angélus and Bolaire reviews: Formulations that have been understood to represent indirect recommendations (e.g. *Anticipated maturity 2010-2030+*) do not exclude the addressor, but place the addressor and addressee in the same group as potential future consumers of the wine that is being reviewed. The dialogistic potential of such formulations will be further expounded in chapter 7.

As indicated by my reconstruction presented in figure 6:13, two main arguments are given in support of the standpoints. The first of these, which refers to the production process, has been transformed into the argumentative proposition 1.1 THE WINE WAS ADEQUATELY MADE. Second, the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Cantemerle review has been reconstructed as the negatively oriented proposition 1.2. I DO NOT LIKE THE WINE, primarily on the basis of the item *uninspiring*.

Taking the formulations as point of departure, I now proceed to give a detailed account of the argumentative organization of the different thematic units of the Cantemerle review. Figure 6:14 below gives an outline of a possible reconstruction of the production-related unit:



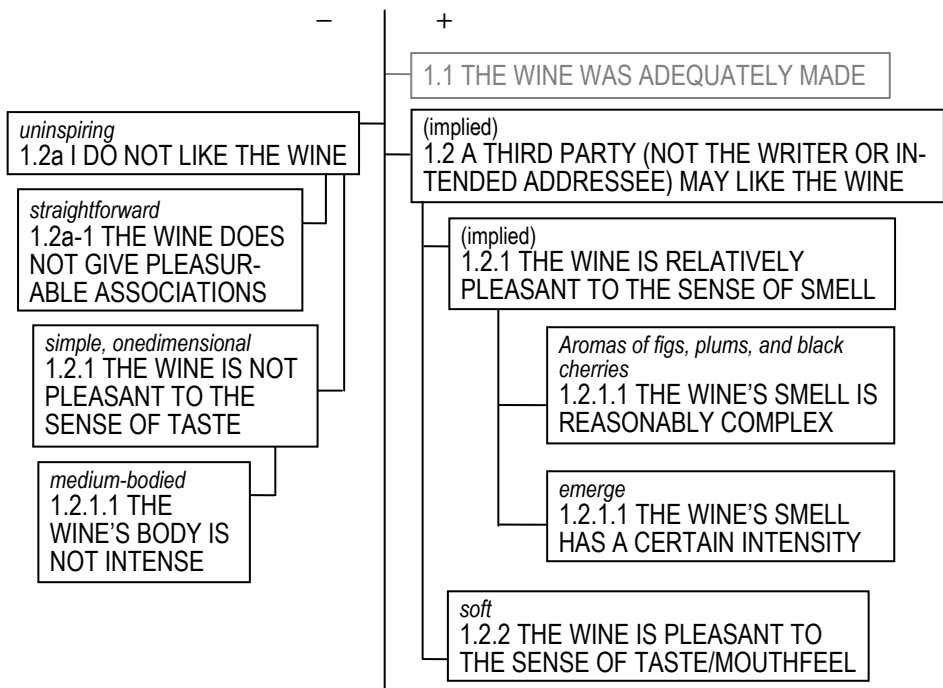
**Figure 6:14 Argumentative organization of the production-related unit of the Cantemerle review**

In its surface form, the production-related unit of the Cantemerle review is very short, by far the shortest one that has been considered so far.<sup>118</sup> The argumentative proposition +1.1 THE WINE WAS ADEQUATELY MADE has been reconstructed on the basis of the formulation *competent...effort*. The reconstruction of the subordinate argument +1.1.1 explicates the fact that the formulations *competent* and *effort* presuppose a human participant. The items invoke the producer of the wine, although no human actor is brought into the colloquy. Compared to *world-renowned*, *brilliant*, and *serious* which were used to refer to the producers in the Bon Pasteur, Angélus and Bolaire reviews, *competent* suggests that there was nothing extraordinary about this producer's performance. This feature of the surface form could perhaps have been reconstructed

<sup>118</sup> It should be pointed out that several of the reviews (77/200) do not provide any production-related information at all.

by means of addition of ONLY in the argumentative propositions +1.1 and +1.1.1. In addition, based on Graddol's (2006) suggestion that implicit evaluation in wine tasting notes may be communicated via the level of detail of the description (see section 2.2), it could be debated whether the formulation in the production-related unit of this review belongs on the plus or the minus side of this argumentative outline. The adversative connective *but* nonetheless implies an opposition between *competent* and the clearly negative emotional evaluation *uninspiring*, which has been taken to justify the positioning of +1.1 on the plus side of the abstraction displayed in figure 6:14. The lack of volubility in this thematic unit of the Cantemerle review will be further discussed in chapter 7, where the surface form in which the argumentative skeletons is dressed up will be attended to using the tools of Appraisal theory.

I now turn to the next thematic unit of the Cantemerle review. Figure 6:15 represents an attempt to lay bare a possible argumentative skeleton of the descriptive-evaluative unit:



**Figure 6:15** Argumentative organization of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Cantemerle review

As displayed in figure 6:15, the superordinate argument -1.2a I DO NOT LIKE THE WINE has been arrived at through transformation of the item *uninspiring*.

The first person pronoun (I) has been added to -1.2a so as to make explicit that the emotional response emanates from a human experiencer. Substitution has been used to transform the emotionally oriented adjectives into a proposition involving a mental process verb. Furthermore, *straightforward* has been understood to amount to -1.2a-1. While *uninspiring* is clearly relatable to a negative emotional response on the part of the taster/writer, *straightforward* is more complicated. The item is not listed in *The Wine Advocate's* glossary of wine terminology as having a particular meaning in the context of wine. I have taken *straightforward* to build on the argument scheme of association, which was discussed above in the analysis of the Bon Pasteur review. The audience is thereby invited to infer their own associations. The interpretation of associative items like *straightforward* used in the field of winespeak may differ considerably between lay readers and initiated professionals who are familiar with the jargon. For this group, associative expressions tend to have more precise meanings (Caballero & Suárez Toste 2010). Given my lack of professional experience and insight (see section 1.2), my interpretation of such items can be understood to proceed from the perspective of an interested lay person. This can also be understood to be the perspective of the audience that Parker professes to have in mind, i.e. the consumer rather than the wine trade.

The description of the wine's aromatics, which succeeds the emotional evaluation in the text's surface form, has not been understood to support the superordinate, negatively oriented, argument labelled -1.2. The expression *Aromas of figs, plums, and black cherries* has instead been interpreted as a description suggesting a certain complexity, which rather implies a positive olfactory quality. I have therefore included the third order argument +1.2.1.1 on the plus side of the argumentative outline given in figure 6:15 above. In addition, based on Caballero's (2007) investigation of motion verbs in wine talk, *emerge* may be used by wine writers to capture the quality of +force. This item can therefore be taken to indicate that the wine's aromatics have a certain degree of intensity, which justifies the reconstruction of +1.2.1.2. Taken together, these descriptions of the wine's smell amount to the idea that it is, as a matter of fact, relatively pleasant. This idea, which is implied by the depiction of the wine's smell as both rather complex and rather intense, has given rise to the argumentative proposition +1.2.1. Furthermore, the item *soft*, which occurs as a descriptor of this wine's taste/mouthfeel has been understood to instantiate yet another argument on the plus side, namely +1.2.2 THE WINE IS PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF TASTE/MOUTHFEEL.<sup>119</sup> +1.2.1 and +1.2.2 ought to add up to a positively oriented emotional response of satisfaction. As indicated above, the writer's emotional response to this wine is however explicitly negative, which

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<sup>119</sup> The Wine Advocate's glossary of wine terminology gives the following specification of the meaning of *soft*: "A soft wine is one that is round and fruity, low in acidity, and has an absence of hard, aggressive tannins." (*The Wine Advocate*. A glossary of wine terms).



leads to ambiguity as to the argumentative drift in this review. In an attempt to capture this obscurity, +1.2 has been added to the outline of this review's argumentative organization. On the minus side, -1.2 is supported by -1.2.1 THE WINE IS NOT PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF TASTE which has been reconstructed on the basis of the items *simple*, *onedimensional*. The argumentative function of *medium-bodied* is somewhat unclear: While supposedly a neutral, purely classifying expression, the fact that it co-occurs with other negative items in the text's surface form may be taken up as an indication that this wine's body lacks the desired viscosity/intensity. The rhetorical potential of the co-occurrence of particular items in the surface form of the reviews will be further discussed in chapter 7.

It is doubtful whether the drink time specification, *over the next decade*, could also be seen as having an argumentative function expressing potential to develop and durability in addition to instantiating an ostensibly positive prescriptive standpoint. On the one hand, *next* could be interpreted as an argument in favour of obtaining this wine, since it is fully mature and not in need of ageing. On the other hand, it also indicates that whatever deficits the wine is found to have, these will not fade away with extended ageing, i.e. the wine has no potential for further development. Moreover, compared to the Bon Pasteur, Angé-lus and Bolaire reviews, the term *decade* gives a rather imprecise idea of this wine's anticipated prime time. While I have chosen not to include this potential evaluative function of the drink time recommendation in the argumentative hierarchy of the Cantemerle review, the vagueness of the formulation in which the recommendation is captured is nonetheless of communicative significance and will be further discussed in section 7.2.4.

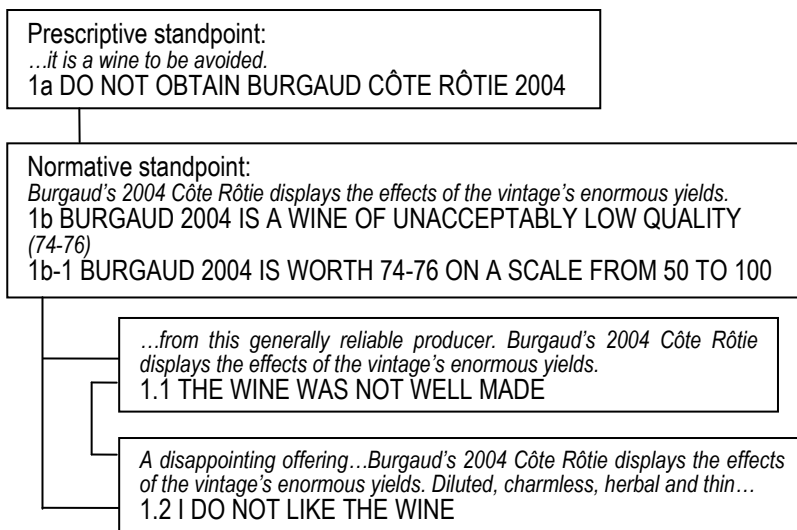
### 6.2.5 BERNARD BURGAUD CÔTE RÔTIE 2004

As pointed out in section 4.2, Bernard Burgaud 2004 is the only review of a Rhône wine that has been included among the texts selected for close analysis. The justification for the selection of this particular text is that it has received one of the lowest scores of all the wines that the data set texts target. From the perspective of the argumentation chapter, it is therefore believed to highlight another type of argumentative strategy employed by the writer. Table 6:5 shows the division into thematic units of the Burgaud 2004 review, which was elucidated in the analysis performed in chapter 5:

**Table 6:5 Thematic units in the review of Bernard Burgaud Côte Rôtie 2004**

HEADING	PRODUCTION	DESCRIPTION	CONSUMPTION
2004 Bernard Burgaud Côte Rôtie A syrah dry table wine from Côte Rôtie, Northern Rhône, Rhône, France Reviewer: Robert Parker Rating: (74-76) Drink: N/A Cost: \$33-56	...from this generally reliable producer...the effects of the vintage's enormous yields.	A disappointing offering...Burgaud's 2004 Côte Rôtie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields. Diluted, charmless, herbal and thin...	...it is a wine to be avoided

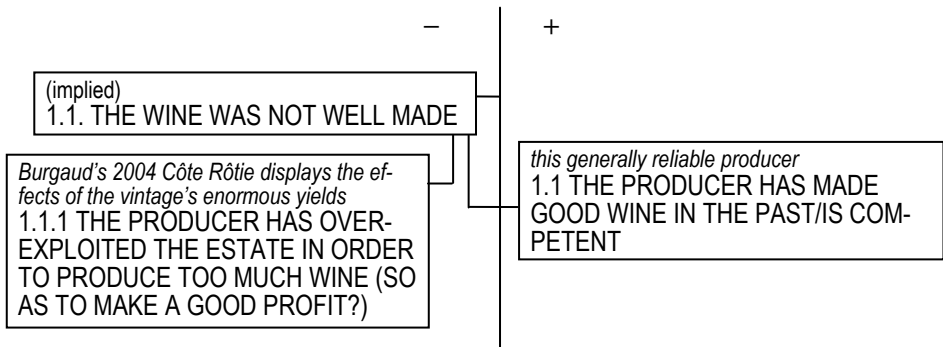
The figure below displays an overview of the proposed reconstruction into standpoints and main arguments of the thematic units of the Burgaud review.



**Figure 6:16 Standpoints and main arguments in the review of Burgaud 2004**

The superordinate normative standpoint 1b is not overtly articulated but implied by the expression *Burgaud's 2004 Côte Rôtie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields*. The numerical score (74-76) underscores the idea that the purported audience is clearly encouraged to share the assessment of this wine as being of unacceptably low quality. Furthermore, the recommendation not to obtain this wine, i.e. the negative prescriptive standpoint, is overtly expressed in the text by means of the expression *...it is a wine to be avoided*, with which the surface form of the review is closed. In contrast to the imperative form, which was discussed above in the analysis of the Cantemerle review, the realization of the prescriptive standpoint as a declarative construction functions to include the addressor in the group that is being dissuaded from obtaining this wine.

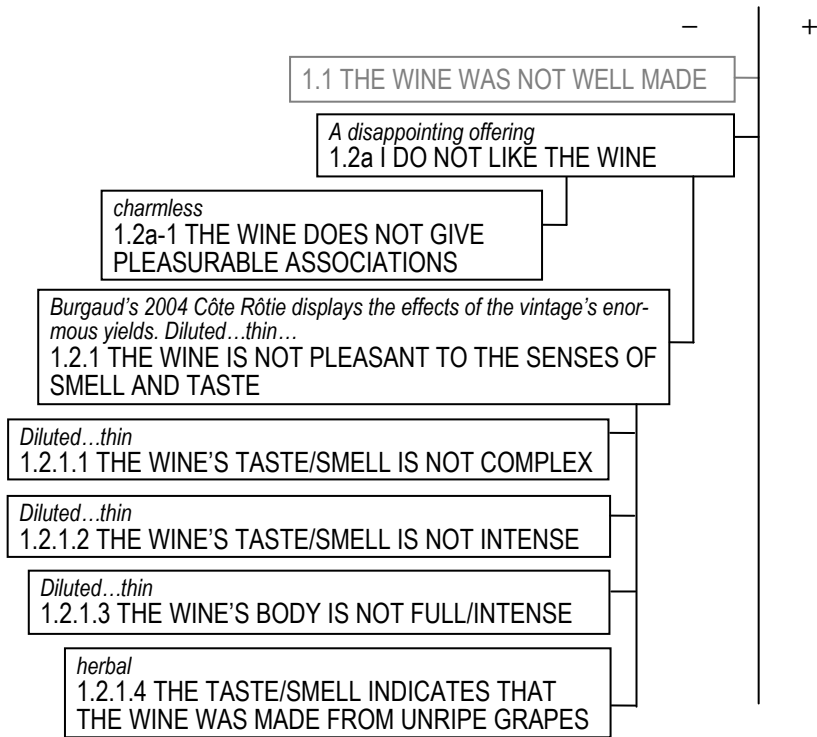
The normative and prescriptive standpoints have been found to be supported by two main arguments, which substantiate the dissuasion from consumption of this wine: 1.1 amounts to the proposition THE WINE WAS NOT WELL MADE and 1.2 has been reconstructed as I DO NOT LIKE THE WINE. Figure 6:17 below displays the argumentation analysis of the production-related unit of the Burgaud review:



**Figure 6:17 Argumentative organization of the production-oriented unit of the Burgaud review**

The figure above proposes a possible reconstruction of the insinuating formulations used in the production-related unit of the Burgaud review. While there are no explicit evaluative cues signalling the idea that the wine was badly made, I have nonetheless taken -1.1 to be implied by the formulation *Burgaud's 2004 Côte Rôtie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields* on the basis of which the sub-ordinate argument -1.1.1 has been reconstructed. Given the suggestive nature of the expression, it has not been self-evident to transform the surface form of this message into an argumentative proposition for which the arguer can be held responsible. The item *effects* can nevertheless be taken as a signal that an argument scheme of cause and effect is employed. The implication is that the producer's choices during the production process, namely to try to make too much wine (*enormous yields*), have had undesirable effects on the resulting quality of the wine. In addition, the formulation *generally reliable producer*, which I have interpreted as a subordinate argument on the plus side, suggests that symptomatic argumentation is drawn on along the following lines: "It is typical of this producer that he is reliable". It is debatable which position in the argumentative hierarchy that the reference to the producer can be taken to occupy. I have opted for positioning it on the plus side, since it could be seen as a kind of reservation which suggests that the dip in quality of this vintage may be a one-off occurrence. It is worth noting that the producer is not referred to by means of a proper noun, a phenomenon which can be seen to decrease the stability of the construction of this person's merit (see Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969:294).

Proceeding to the thematic unit of the Burgaud review that captures the tasting event, the argumentative overview of the descriptive-evaluative unit has been reconstructed as follows:



**Figure 6:18 Argumentative organization of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Burgaud review**

The formulation *a disappointing offering* has been taken to make up the superordinate level of this argumentative organization, i.e. -1.2 I DO NOT LIKE THE WINE. The item *disappointing* can be understood as based on ethotic argumentation, i.e. the expression of the arguer's emotional reaction is presented as relevant substantiation to enhance the plausibility of the standpoints. *Charmless*, however, which has been reconstructed as the argumentative proposition -1.2a-1 draws on another argument scheme, which I have termed association. The expression brings to mind a human being lacking charm, which is taken to reinforce the plausibility of the negatively oriented normative standpoint -1b and -1b-1 as well as the dissuasive prescriptive standpoint -1a. The process indicated by the verb *displays* suggests perception during the here and now tasting event. Simultaneously, the reference to *enormous yields* implies evidence that emanates from external sources. I have understood the reference to production factors to operate as part of both the production-related and the descriptive-evaluative argumentative structure. From the descriptive-evaluative perspective, the mentioning of production-related aspects can be interpreted as a

covert way of saying that the wine reveals perceptual deficits, which -1.2.1 is designed to demonstrate. Furthermore, the items *diluted* and *thin* have been understood to contribute to -1.2.1, reinforcing the idea of unpleasantness. In Parker's glossary of wine terms (*The wine advocate*. A glossary of wine terms), *diluted* is listed as a synonym of *thin*, meaning that the wine is found watery and lacking in body. These items can also be understood to operate on a subordinate argumentative level, indicating insufficiency of complexity as well as intensity, possibly of smell and taste as well as texture and weight in the mouth. -1.2.1.1–1.2.1.3 represent an attempt to capture the diversity of meanings that these formulations can be taken to have. Furthermore, *herbal* has been interpreted as a synonym of 'vegetal', a term which can be used to indicate that the wine was made from unripe grapes. Although this text in fact deals with a wine from the Rhône Valley in which aromas of herbs are said to be particularly common (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker's glossary of wine terms), *herbal* has been taken to be suggestive of a major flaw in this wine's smell/taste. The transformation of *herbal* into the argumentative proposition -1.2.1.4 is visualized in figure 6:18 above. The coordinative connective *and*, which links *herbal* with the other, more apparently negative, descriptors in the string *diluted, charmless, herbal and thin*, functions to support my interpretation of this instance of the term.

As pointed out above, what has been regarded as the consumption-oriented unit of this review, i.e. *it is a wine to be avoided*, has been seen as an expression of the prescriptive standpoint, but not as having any other argumentative significance. The justification for this is that no reference is made as to how the potential evolvment and durability of this wine may affect the judgement of its quality.

This completes the argumentation analysis of the Burgaud review, which has been included among the texts selected for close analysis based on the fact that it involves clearly negative orientation, invoking a discourse community in univocal agreement regarding the qualitative deficits of this wine. The declaration on *The Wine Advocate* website that "[t]here are specific standards of quality that full-time wine professionals recognize" (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker's rating system) contributes to the idea that the assessment is based on universally acknowledged principles. Interestingly, I note in passing that the American wine magazine *Wine Spectator* (which has also adopted Parker's scoring system), gives a completely different characterization of the same wine: "Juicy, with a racy mix of red and black fruit – cherry, plum and currant – followed by vibrant mineral, coffee and dark olive notes. Long, tangy finish. Fine typicity. Drink now through 2011. Score - 91."<sup>20</sup> Although Parker's declaration

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<sup>20</sup> This review of Burgaud Côte Rôtie 2004 is attributed to James Molesworth, [www.winespectator.com](http://www.winespectator.com), Dec. 15, 2006. Available at [http://www.grapefoot.com/winery/Domaine-Bernard-Burgaud/France/display\\_1139.htm](http://www.grapefoot.com/winery/Domaine-Bernard-Burgaud/France/display_1139.htm). Date of access 22 July 2011.

on *The Wine Advocate* website amounts to the idea of a unified system of quality standards for wine evaluation, the *Wine Spectator* review of Burgaud 2004 suggests the existence of considerable diversity in the real world discourse community of wine. In view of the description of Parker's wine writing provided in other sources (see e.g. McCoy 2005, Johnson 2005, Nossiter 2004), it is perhaps especially noteworthy that the *Wine Spectator* critic has judged this wine to have *fine typicité*, a characteristic that has not been observed to figure in any of the reviews that have been exposed to close scrutiny in the present section.

### **6.3 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION AND POINTS OF DEPARTURE**

This chapter has highlighted the argumentative dimension of the persuasiveness in Parker's writing. Section 6.1 presented a schematic argumentation structure, which functions as a flexible model that is relatively fine-grained, yet adjustable to accommodate all of the 200 tasting notes of the data set. The schematic argumentation structure presented in figure 6:1 is related to the division into thematic units undertaken in the exploration of representations, which was recounted in chapter 5: A general pattern that was elucidated was that information provided in the heading as well as the consumption-oriented unit can be seen to have the argumentative function of a normative and a prescriptive standpoint, respectively. These two standpoints are related to the ambiguity of the genre that is presently under study, which can be seen as either 'assessment' or 'recommendation', or rather as assessment which has the superordinate purpose of giving a consumption recommendation. The production-related and descriptive-evaluative units were moreover reinterpreted as main arguments given to enhance the plausibility of the standpoints. The consumption-oriented unit, which predicts the wine's potential to evolve and anticipated durability, was found to have the potential function of an argument in addition to realizing the prescriptive standpoint.

Section 6.2 took the schematic argumentative structure as point of departure for the presentation of close interpretive investigation of the five selected reviews. Although not apparently observable at first glance, the elucidation demonstrated that the formulations in the surface form of the message are transformable into plausible argumentative propositions positioned in intricate argumentative hierarchies. Following van Eemeren's & Grootendorst's guidelines (2004:110–112), the transformations into argumentative skeletons of each individual text were continuously accounted for by means of references to explicit as well as implicit cues in the text under scrutiny, the entire corpus and the wider discursive and socio-cultural frames.

The interpretive analysis touched on a number of observations that are relevant with respect to the research questions posed in section 1.2. Although the exploratory discussion is not easily captured in a summary format, an attempt

will nevertheless be made to recapitulate the most significant findings of the argumentation analysis in relation to the empirical aim as well as the methodological design of the present study.

The argumentation analysis can be said to reveal an arguer that places himself in a position of authority, ascribing to himself the ratified power to pronounce on the assessed products' value, thereby providing the prospective consumer with consumption recommendations. The exactness by means of which the normative standpoints are articulated reinforces the construction of an authoritative discursive persona that has extensive expertise in the domain that the texts target.

As shown by the detailed dissection of the argumentation in the production-related and descriptive-evaluative thematic units, the analysis is furthermore indicative of a rational arguer, who substantiates emotional evaluative pronouncements with factual evidence. The organization of Parker's argumentation can therefore be said to appeal to the audience as sensible human beings. The subordinate factual argumentation contributes to moulding Parker's discursive persona as meticulous and precise, both as regards the production-related and the descriptive-evaluative argumentation.

Drawing on the notions of argument scheme and topoi (see section 3.2.2), the interpretive analysis presented throughout section 6.2 strived to unveil underlying values and argumentative principles that are hidden in the texts' taken-for-granted-ness. Parker's argumentation was shown to have the potential to reference a number of assumed values related to general topoi, such as durability, affordability and uniqueness, which can be understood to be embraced by most sensible human beings. In addition, a number of specialized topoi were found to be addressed, for instance the idea of the wines' place of origin as well as their typicality. These topoi will be further discussed in chapter 7. The vagueness of the expressions that are used was continuously demonstrated to leave room for different interpretations. The fact that these values are often addressed indirectly or left completely implicit to be inferred by the purported addressee construes the audience as having the capacity to make these inferences. In this sense, Parker's argumentation is indicative of a well-informed arguer directing himself to an audience with the same level of knowledge, not a professional addressing lay people.

The discussion furthermore touched on the difficulty to distinguish symptomatic argumentation, which relies on a relation of concomitance, and instrumental argumentation, involving cause and effect. The difficulty to differentiate between symptomatic and instrumental argumentation has previously been observed by Garssen (1997, addressed in Snoeck-Henkemans 2002). I suggest that these types of argumentation schemes are not mutually exclusive but can be understood to operate on different levels of generalization: While a symptomatic relation is established in a particular stretch of text, this relation may simultaneously instantiate a more generalized scheme of cause and effect, which was observed to be a plausible interpretation of the relation repeatedly



set up between the winemaker's capacity and the resulting quality of the wine. The distinction between these argument schemes is of significance in relation to the normative testing methods proposed by the pragma-dialectical model of argumentation (van Eemeren & Grootendorst 1992:101–102): The tenability of symptomatic argumentation can be tested by questioning whether a concomitance relation really can be proven to exist. Although not explicitly indicated in Parker's texts, the purported addressee was shown by the analysis to be repeatedly invited to infer the concomitance relation between the producer of the wine and the wine's resulting quality. The analysis also suggested that the recurrent use of symptomatic argumentation can be taken to be suggestive of a more general argument scheme of cause and effect, according to which the responsible wine maker is presented as the major cause of the wines' quality. Instrumental argumentation can be questioned by critically examining whether the effects are really desirable and whether they may have any harmful side-effects. As indicated above, my intention is however not to offer a normative evaluation of Parker's argumentation. It is nonetheless important to point out that the text construes the audience as capable of inferring these implicit connections, and hence as a knowledgeable group of fellow members of the same discourse community. This characteristic of Parker's discourse is reinforced by means of argumentation based on comparison: The texts were found repeatedly to make reference to other, comparable wines, a form of justification that can be understood to build on the assumption that these comparisons are relevant for the purported addressee.

The interpretive discussion of Parker's descriptive-evaluative argumentation addressed the argument scheme of association, which draws on a type of justification that is implied by the association that the text invokes. When using associative argumentation, the arguer assumes that the purported audience will find the associations relevant for the justification of the standpoint. The use of associative argumentation simultaneously contributes to the construction of a joint writer-reader identity. It is conspicuous for Parker's use of associative argumentation that it addresses human characteristics such as 'sensual', 'straightforward' and 'charmless', but disfavours associations to nobility and aristocracy, such as 'gentlemanly' and 'well-bred', terms that were observed by Silverstein (2003) to be characteristic of Michael Broadbent's wine writing (see section 2.2). Parker's use of associative argumentation construes a joint writer-reader identity of ordinary consumers rather than moulding his own as well as the purported audience's identity as members of a group with inherited breeding (see section 2.1).

Furthermore, the descriptive-evaluative units were observed to rely on ethotic argumentation. The inclusion of emotionally oriented reactions to the perception of the wines presupposes that the arguer's emotional response to the wines' quality is relevant for the purported audience. The subordinate argumentation of the descriptive-evaluative units can perhaps be seen as symptomatic along the following lines: "It is typical of a likeable wine that it displays quali-

ties a, b, c etc.” and “It is typical of a dislikeable wine that it lacks qualities a, b, c etc.”. Contextual information about Parker’s good will, virtue and practical wisdom contributes to rendering argumentation from ethos justifiable in the present context: Parker is anxious to protect the consumer’s rights, he takes a critical and independent stance with respect to the wine industry and he has outstanding senses of smell and taste, acute memory for sensory impressions as well as extensive experience.

It is moreover worth noting that it was found typical for the wines’ olfactory qualities to be presented in a decomposed manner, a representational technique that functions to highlight the presence of the component parts. The analysis proposed that the presence of component parts not only serves the purpose of providing descriptions of the wines’ smell, but also to offer justification for the superordinate perceptually and emotionally oriented argumentation. The putative reader is thereby assumed to agree with the arguer regarding the implicit idea that the presence of more numerous component parts in a wine’s smell entails more sensuous pleasure and consequently emotional satisfaction.

The elucidation throughout section 6.2 furthermore indicated that the wine’s degree of intensity in colour, smell as well as taste was found to be related to proclamations about sensory and emotional gratification. The most central element of Parker’s descriptive-evaluative argumentation, which is allowed to occupy the foreground of the writer’s and audience’s joint consciousness, is the degree of presence of perceptual qualities in all the stages of the wine tasting event. The argumentation analysis has given an indication that the standpoints are supported so as to amount to the following world view of wine quality: ‘The greater the presence of all the perceptual qualities, the better the wine.’ In relation to this world view, the argumentation in the reviews can be seen as invitational with respect to the addressed audience of wine consumers in that it encourages the audience to be convinced on their own accords regarding the quality of the wines that are reviewed: Parker’s argumentation can thereby be said to invite reflection and self-persuasion on the part of the intended addressee, which could be understood as a criterion of good argumentation from the perspective of rhetorical argumentation theory (Tindale 2009:48–49).

According to McCoy (2005:236) the message “more is better” has been easy to appreciate for consumers with no history of wine drinking and no prior knowledge of wine. Since the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, not only Americans but also large groups of new consumers from Asia have increasingly been embracing the French wine culture as part of the construction of their identities as people belonging to a global society with refined taste and plenty on money. For this group of consumers, the sensible message “more is better” makes wine a credible product in contrast to the traditional French maxim according to which “Lafite makes the best Lafite and Latour the best Latour” (Johnson (2005:43), which emphasizes the importance of a wine’s traditional personality. Todd (2010:124) suggests that Parker’s reviews invoke a new, more flexible category of Bordeaux wines, which allows for attributes to be valued that

would be considered contra-standard from the perspective of the traditional Bordeaux categories of wine.

Chapter 6.2 has provided a detailed presentation of the interpretive analytical technique used to scrutinize the data. The presentation revealed plausible argumentative outlines, involving main arguments as well as subordinate arguments, of the five reviews selected from the data set for this exposition. The methodological contribution of the elucidation presented in chapter 6 is the possibility to abstract the argumentative content from the form in which the message is captured. The argumentative skeletons of the reviews that result from the argumentation analysis will subsequently function as points of departure for the investigation undertaken in the next chapter, which further explores the linguistic realization of the argumentation. While the argumentation analysis has taken the linguistic expressions or formulations as point of departure and aimed to tease out the arguments, the structure that they are part of and the argument schemes and *topoi* on which they are based, thus abstracting the meaning content from the form in which it is dressed up, the interpretive Appraisal analysis presented in section 7.2 below instead sheds light on the linguistic expressions in relation to the argumentative meanings they have been found to express, thereby exploring the communicative potential of linguistic choices.

## 7 PERSUASIVENESS IN APPRAISAL

The previous two chapters have explored the perspectives of representations and argumentation in Parker's writing. In chapter 5, the wine reviews were divided into thematic units, which were distinguished and characterized in terms of temporal and spatial frames, mode of knowing and source of evidence. These distinctions are taken to be fundamental for the investigations undertaken in both chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6 subsequently scrutinized the argumentation in Parker's reviews using the analytical tools of pragma-dialectics, which enable reconstruction of the surface form of the message so that the suppositional meaning content of the text can be laid bare. The analysis presented a schematic overview of the argumentation structure of the whole corpus of 200 texts as well as detailed scrutiny of the five texts selected for close interpretive analysis, which purported to reveal explicit and implicit ideas, assumptions and values that the texts can be understood to communicate.

This chapter proposes a different analytical perspective on the material, assisted by the tools of Appraisal theory, which was introduced in section 3.2.3. In order to accommodate the specialized attitudinal values referenced in the wine reviews, the original Appraisal system of Attitude (see section 3.2.3) needs to be extended. The knowledge gained from the analyses of representations and argumentation functions as support for the addition of several provisional subcategories which are drawn on to systematize the current material. Firstly, the division into thematic units is taken to be a basic heuristic for the classification of attitudinal values in the current material. Secondly, the subcategories of Attitude relevant for investigation of this data are related to the emotional, associative and sensory values that Parker's argumentation was found to express. In addition, the *topoi* that were unveiled in the argumentation analysis are also of importance for the development of a system of Attitude that is appropriate with respect to the present data.

The presentation in chapter 7 intends first to give a rudimentary overview of patterns of potentially attitudinal meanings in the whole material of 200 tasting notes. The classification of the material into subcategories of Attitude results in a schematic representation of Parker's attitudinal profile, which is presented and discussed in section 7.1. Subsequently, section 7.2 presents close interpre-

tive scrutiny of the five selected reviews employing the entire Appraisal system, i.e. the analysis draws on the components of Attitude, Engagement as well as Graduation, to assist the interpretation (see section 3.2.3 for a presentation of these analytical resources). The findings from the investigation of the entire corpus are incorporated in the close interpretive analysis insofar as this enlightens the discussion. Section 7.3 finally sums up the most important results of the investigations presented in this chapter and relates these findings to the empirical aim of the current study.

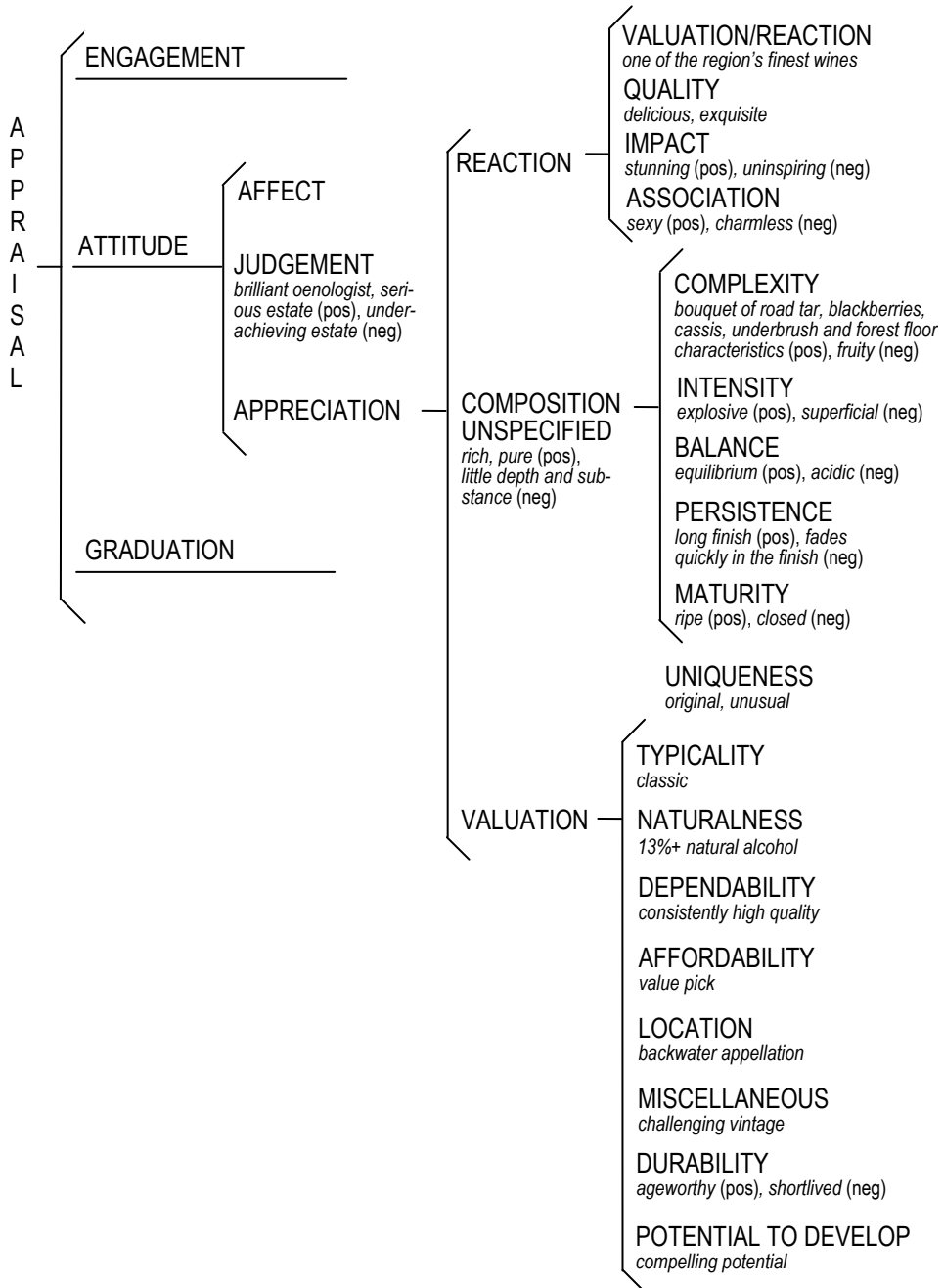
## 7.1 PARKER'S ATTITUDINAL PROFILE

In order to classify the attitudinal values potentially referenced in the present material, several provisional categories were added to the original system of Attitude as it is described in the literature on Appraisal theory (see section 3.2.3). The original Appraisal system of Attitude is thereby regarded as a flexible tool for doing contextually situated discourse analysis rather than as a set of permanent categories. The analysis of Attitude that is carried out in the present study shows how the Appraisal model can be adapted to investigation of a highly specialized field with its own arrangement of field specific values.

The network of Attitude subcategories that is developed for the current exploration is employed as a scheme for annotation of all the 200 corpus texts using the UAM Corpus Tool. The advantage of using the Corpus Tool for the coding of Attitude of the entire material is both that it allows automatic accumulation of the number of instantiations of the different categories and that it simplifies observation of the diversity of different surface forms that can be used to instantiate the categories.

Figure 7:1 below displays the system of Attitude that was developed in order to enable an outline of Parker's attitudinal profile as it emerges from the whole data set of 200 reviews. The proposed categories are illustrated by means of examples from the corpus, which are reproduced in italics. The figure is followed by a rudimentary description of how the subcategories have been elucidated. It is thereby demonstrated how the Attitude subsystem of Appreciation proposed in the current study relates to previous research that employs the Appraisal model.

The interpretive discussion, which is subsequently conducted in section 7.2, purports to make the investigation as transparent as possible by displaying the reasoning underlying the additional categories as well as the difficulty to maintain clear-cut category boundaries in the coding of the material.



**Figure 7:1 The Appraisal system of Attitude adapted to the language of wine appreciation**

The extended and modified version of the Appraisal system of Attitude displayed in figure 7:1 clarifies that the additions to the original model concern exclusively the subsystem of Appreciation. The divisions proposed by the sub-components of Reaction, Composition and Valuation (see section 3.2.3) were taken to be basic for the organization of categories. As pointed out in section 3.2.3, Reaction refers to an emotional response transferred to the appreciated phenomenon, Composition incorporates appreciation of sensory perceptions and Valuation concerns non-aesthetic appraisal of the evaluated entity, which according to Kaltenbacher (2006:272) subsumes field-specific values that are to some extent institutionalized. The usefulness of these basic subtypes of Appreciation for the purposes of the present investigation is substantiated by the division into thematic units undertaken in chapter 5, where it was shown that the writer's perspective is fundamentally different in the different units: The descriptive-evaluative unit references the writer's immediate experience, and the Appreciation subcategories primarily relevant for this unit are therefore Reaction and Composition. The attitudinal values in the production-related unit are rather of the non-aesthetic kind, not relying on direct perceptual experiences but on other sources. These values are therefore regarded as different subtypes of Valuation. Similarly, the potential attitudinal values occurring in the consumption-oriented unit are conceivably based on informed consideration of several kinds of sources, including accumulated memorization of previous experiences. Such values are also incorporated under Valuation in the scheme of Attitude developed for the current study.

Martin & White (2005) propose two subcategories of Reaction: Quality and Impact. While Quality focuses on the evaluated entity, Impact highlights the evaluator's response. In addition, the ambivalent subcategory of Reaction/Valuation has been added for the coding of generally appreciative lexis which Bednarek (2009:174) refers to as "semantically underspecified". The potential rhetorical significance of such category ambiguities will be further discussed throughout section 7.2 below. Furthermore, to accommodate the current data, the subcategory of Association has been added, which subsumes occurrences where associations are drawn on to express a positive or negative emotional response. Association can perhaps be understood to invoke the Reaction value of Impact, drawing on the audience's capacity to imagine the emotive response that the association conjures. Occurrences that I have listed as Association could therefore perhaps have been seen as invoked Impact. These occurrences have nonetheless been provided with a separate label since they are so frequent in the material under study.

Given that sensory perceptions play an important role in the wine reviews, the Appreciation subcategory of Composition is of particular significance in the present study. Several subtypes have been added to Martin & White's (2005) original model, which is delimited to Complexity and Balance. While these original subtypes are found to be useful, the compositional values expressed in the wine tasting notes also relate to Intensity and Persistence. Furthermore, the

potentially compositional subcategory of Maturity has been added. While related to the immediate sensory experience, occurrences included under Maturity may also involve references to the wines' current degree of Maturity in relation to their anticipated Maturity. This Composition subcategory could perhaps also be understood to be a non-aesthetic value, i.e. a subtype of Valuation. The subcategory of unspecified Composition has been included to deal with occurrences that were understood to express a compositional value that is referable to several of the proposed Composition subtypes or where it was not possible to specify the subcategory referenced by the text. In order to classify the items occurring in the text into the different subcategories of Composition, recourse has been made to several glossaries of wine terms. In addition to the list of terms given on *The Wine Advocate's* website (*The Wine Advocate*. A glossary of wine terms), the Wineanorak's (Goode), the Grapestomper's (Grapestomper glossary of wine terms) and Hawkin's (1995) lists of terminology have been consulted. It should be pointed out that the classification of the terms occurring in Parker's texts is based on my interpretation of the meanings listed in these glossaries. It is important to note that the scheme of Appreciation developed for the present study requires interpretation on the part of the analyst and should not be regarded as an objective screen which can be used to filter the data in order to obtain scientifically verifiable evidence.

The subsystem of Valuation has been adapted to accommodate the specific, institutionalized values that are instantiated in the wine reviews. The unifying characteristic of these subcategories is that they are not based on the writer's immediate emotional or perceptual experience. It could perhaps be debated whether the subcategory of Uniqueness should be regarded as an aesthetic subcategory, relatable to the general aesthetic canon of distinctiveness proposed by Charters (2007:174, see section 2.1), or whether it is better included as a field-specific subtype under Valuation. In order to illuminate this elusiveness, Uniqueness has been placed between Composition and Valuation in figure 7:1. Furthermore, the Attitude subcategory of Judgement subsumes both occurrences where the referent is realized as a conscious human participant responsible for the wine's production and instances where the conscious human participation is construed as an entity (see figure 7:1). As indicated in section 3.2.3, occurrences of Judgement suggest that the wine's producer is promoted in the appreciation of the wine. The rhetorical potential of the various instantiations of this Attitude subtype will be further discussed throughout the interpretive analysis in section 7.2.

The scheme of Attitude presented in figure 7.1 has been employed for annotation of all of the 200 reviews using the UAM Corpus tool. As pointed out above, the coding of the whole data set serves two purposes in the present investigation: First, it gives a hint of the relative distributions of the different attitudinal values that are referred to in the corpus material so as to be able to provide a schematic characterization of Parker's attitudinal profile. Second, the compilation of categories is employed as support for the interpretive analysis,



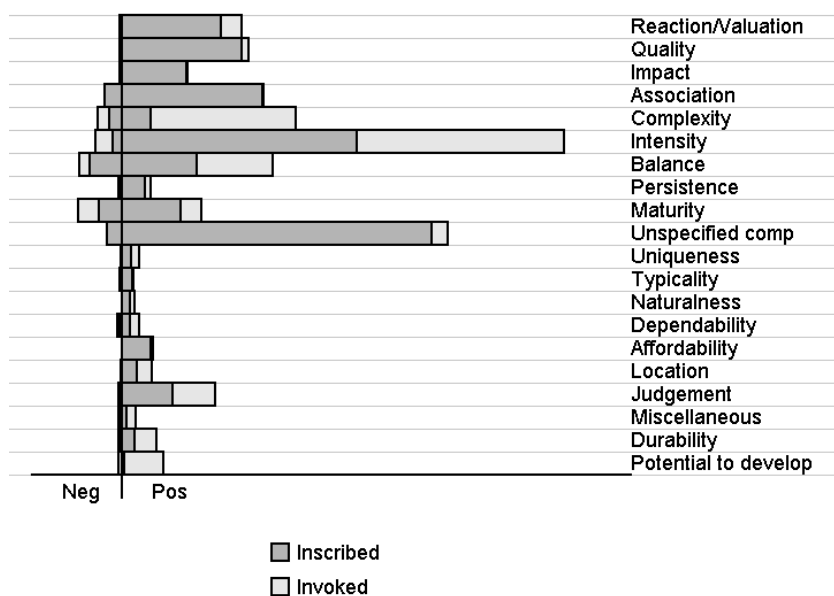
making it possible to provide and compare alternative examples from the discussed categories. As will be demonstrated throughout the interpretive analysis presented in section 7.2, discrete subcategories are not always easy to maintain, since linguistic realization sometimes has the potential to simultaneously invoke several different attitudinal values. In addition, due to the elusive nature of the texts under study and the fact that the analysis has proceeded from an outsider's rather than an initiate's perspective, it has not always been possible to determine whether a positive or negative value is indicated by the expressions in the text. Such unclear cases have been marked as ambiguous in the coding and have been excluded from the schematic overview given in figure 7:2. It is therefore important to emphasize that what is displayed in the schematic compilation below is to be regarded as a gross overview of the distribution of Attitude instantiations, which enables visualization of tendencies in the material, but which does not provide the key to understanding the intricate interplay of different Attitude values that bestows persuasiveness on Parker's use of Appraisal resources.

As observed by Martin & White (2005:62), Attitude can also be invoked by means of expressions that are not in themselves explicitly attitudinal, but where an attitudinal meaning is nonetheless more or less clearly implied. In the coding of the whole data set, I strive to maintain a distinction between inscribed and invoked Attitude. These notions will be exemplified and discussed throughout section 7.2.

Since no contrastive material has been used, the purpose of the schematic overview given in figure 7:2 is not to show if and how Parker's texts differ from texts written by other writers regarding the distribution of different inscribed and invoked attitudinal values. The coding of the whole material nonetheless serves the function of enabling observation of the relative frequencies of different attitudinal values and thereby of giving a preliminary idea of the comparative importance assigned to them in Parker's writing. In addition, the rudimentary categorization of Attitude provides a backdrop for the close interpretive analyses of the five selected texts, relating observations in the selected reviews to schematic patterns in the material as a whole. The diagram below presents the findings in a bar chart which displays relative proportions instead of the exact number of instantiations for each category, the intention being to capture Parker's attitudinal profile.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> I thank Anders Hommerberg for designing a computer program specifically for the purpose of enabling a clear and simple visualization of the distribution of inscribed and invoked attitudinal values in Parker's wine writing.



**Figure 7:2** Relative distributions of Attitude categories in the data set of 200 reviews

Given that the vast majority of the data set texts concern positive assessments of the reviewed wines (see figure 4:1), it is not surprising that Parker’s attitudinal profile shows a pronounced tendency towards positive rather than negative Attitude. As indicated in the discussion of the material in section 4.1, the positive orientation of Parker’s writing is not incidental, but can rather be regarded as typical of his wine writing, contributing to a general flavour of enthusiasm about the topic.

The top bar of the diagram incorporates instances of Appreciation that are semantically underspecified (Reaction/Valuation), a category that Parker makes frequent use of. The instances included in this category can be understood to have the argumentative function of expressing the normative standpoint, i.e. the assessment that the argumentation in the texts functions to defend (see chapter 6). Furthermore, the three following bars of the diagram refer to the Appreciation subcategory of Reaction, i.e. emotionally oriented appreciation of the product. The diagram suggests that Parker’s Reaction profile is to some extent dominated by expressions that are classified under the label Association, i.e. lexis which draws on the audience’s capacity to imagine the emotive response that the association conjures. As indicated in chapter 6, associative lexis has the communicative potential of confirming the writer’s and audience’s joint membership of the same discourse community, for which the associations are assumed to give rise to similar emotive responses. While most frequently used by the writer to express positive emotional appreciation, associative lexis also has

a tendency to express negative emotional attitude. It is less common for Parker to express a negative emotional response by means of Quality or Impact. Associative lexis can be seen to offer an indirect way to express emotional attitude, which is less blatantly confrontational in negative assessments. This strategy allows the writer to subtly align the audience into his affective value position, thus creating group affiliation without apparent confrontation with those that may have an oppositional view. The distinction between, and rhetorical potential of, the Reaction subcategories will be further discussed in section 7.2.

Furthermore, the bar chart presented in figure 7:2 shows the relative proportions of Composition values in the whole material. The diagram gives a clear indication that Intensity is of prime importance in Parker's wine writing. It should be made clear that the Composition subcategory of Intensity subsumes reference to intensity of colour, smell as well as taste. The fact that these occurrences are brought together under one Composition category heading makes it possible to reveal that intensity constitutes a dominant over-all theme in Parker's reviews. Complexity and Balance, which are primarily referable to smell and taste, respectively, are less frequent, but still of great importance in Parker's writing. It is however less frequent for Parker's reviews to refer to the compositional value of Persistence. The chart furthermore suggests that Parker uses a more or less equal proportion of inscribed and invoked realizations to express the attitudinal value of Intensity, while a majority of the occurrences of Complexity are instantiated by means of lexis that invoke the attitudinal value. As suggested by the prevalence of the subcategory of Unspecified composition, I have found it difficult to pinpoint the relevant subcategory of a relatively large number of instances of Composition. This analytical difficulty can be taken as indicative of the elusive and ambiguous nature of the investigated material, which will be further discussed in section 7.2. Moreover, when expressing negative attitudinal values, Parker is found most often to refer to deficits in Balance and Maturity. Lack of balance can be seen as an important Composition subtype employed by Parker to express negative attitude. Expressions indicating lack of maturity may however not necessarily contribute to a negative general assessment of the wine, since it is common for fine wines that they need aging in order to reach maturity.

Instances where the wine's current degree of maturity is presented as not yet adequate are frequently correlated with the Valuation subcategories of Potential to develop and Durability. The relative proportions of the other subcategories included under Valuation are less conspicuous in this rudimentary overview. It is however of interest to take note of the fact that Parker's texts make extensive use of Judgement, i.e. occurrences which involve attitudinal positioning with respect to a conscious human participant.

The UAM corpus tool enables coding of Engagement as well as Graduation alongside Attitude. It is a useful device for accumulation of occurrences that the analyst assigns to the different subcategories of the three components of the Appraisal system, which makes it possible to incorporate a relatively large ma-

terial in the analysis and still keep track of multiple classifications. While the 200 texts were also coded for Graduation and Engagement, I have chosen to delimit the accumulative overview offered in figure 7:2 to instantiations of Attitude, the aspect of Appraisal analysis that Martin & White (2005:39) regard as focal (see section 3.2.3).<sup>122</sup> The display provided in the bar chart brings out the relative significance of the types of attitudinal values that the writer presents himself as responding to, and it thereby enables a rudimentary characterization of Parker's attitudinal profile. The coding of Engagement and Graduation in all of the 200 texts will nonetheless be drawn on in the close enquiry presented throughout section 7.2, where it will function to inform and support interpretations.

## **7.2 APPRAISAL ANALYSIS OF SELECTED REVIEWS**

This section offers close interpretive analysis of the five selected reviews that were introduced in section 4.2. The presentation in section 7.2 is arranged in the same order as it appears in sections 4.2 and 6.2. It is important to emphasize that although the appraisal analysis focuses on the same selected material as the argumentation analysis, the perspective is different, since it is the potential rhetorical effects of the realization of the message that is in focus rather than the plausible message itself, which is the main target of the argumentation analysis. In other words, whereas the argumentation perspective strived to break down the text so as to lay bare the potential content skeletons of the selected reviews, the perspective of appraisal involves dressing the same skeletons up again in their linguistic outfits, exploring the persuasiveness of linguistic choices. In order to clarify the link between the argumentation analysis and the appraisal analysis, references are continuously made to the argumentation figures in the preceding chapter. In addition, the corresponding argument notations are given in summarizing analytical overviews, which are provided in tables at the end of each of the subsections of chapter 7. These illustrations are intended to clarify the relation between the interpretive analyses of the current study, and thereby make the elaboration easier to follow.

### **7.2.1 CHÂTEAU BON PASTEUR 2003**

Just as in the preceding analysis chapter, the Appraisal analysis is initiated by the review of Château Bon Pasteur 2003, a wine that has inspired an appreciative but not exuberant response. This is clarified by means of the normative and prescriptive standpoints that were reconstructed in section 6.2.1 (see figure

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<sup>122</sup> In order to test the tenability of the system of Attitude that is hereby proposed for the language of wine appreciation, Don & Hommerberg (2010, 2011, forthcoming) present an inter-rater analysis of 10% of the material that has been used in the present study, i.e. 20 texts. The results of this study are currently being processed.

6:2). The numerical score, 89, which occurs as part of the heading or technical card of the review, separate from the tasting note text, is taken to be the textual realization on which the reconstruction of the normative standpoint 1b-1. It is somewhat problematic to classify numerical scores like for instance 89 with respect to the Appraisal system's subcategories of Appreciation (see section 7.1). Do they represent occurrences of subjective, interpersonally oriented Reaction based on the writer's emotional appreciation of the wine, or should they be regarded as occurrences of objective, ideationally oriented Valuation, specifying the value of the targeted product with respect to field-specific standards?<sup>123</sup> The Valuation/Reaction ambiguity has previously been discussed by Kaltenbacher (2006), who considers this ambivalence to be a deficit of the current Appraisal model. Instead of seeing it as a theoretical shortcoming, I regard this ambiguity as an asset in the present context, since it serves the purpose of highlighting the Janus face of the communicative potential of the numerical assessment: Johnson's satirical characterization of Parker's numerical scoring draws attention to this ambivalence:

“...if I were being forced to produce marks this is where I would start. I love it; it must be in the high nineties. Then it is a matter of maths, giving points to the number I thought of in the first place” (Johnson 2005:42).

Reports of how the numerical scores have been interpreted by the audience and how they are used to establish the ultimate value as well as determine the price of wine (see e.g. McCoy 2005, Langewiesche 2000, Steinberger 2007b) indicate that the numerical ratings have the potential to be taken up as Valuations or perhaps even as exact technical renderings.<sup>124</sup> In terms of the Appraisal component of Engagement (see section 3.2.3), the numerical score can be understood to be monoglossic, in view of the fact that the precise specification of the wine's worthiness to exactly 89 does not reference other potential viewpoints. We can nonetheless understand 89 as a statement that is up for debate, i.e. as a monoglossic assertion. This is indicated both by the fact that the numerical score is textually foregrounded as part of the heading and that it is presented as requiring substantiation, which is subsequently provided in the form of the tasting note text. The superordinate normative standpoint 1b (see figure 6:2) has been reconstructed on the basis of the expression *Bon Pasteur has turned out extremely well for such a challenging vintage*, which will be further discussed below.

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<sup>123</sup> The numerical scores were not included in the schematic overview of Parker's attitudinal profile given in figure 7:2.

<sup>124</sup> Exact technical descriptions are not included in the Appraisal system charted by Martin & White (2005), but relegated to a category named Involvement, which is also subsumed under the interpersonal meaning facet of discourse semantics in the SFL model of language.

In contrast to the normative standpoints, the prescriptive standpoint is not articulated with the same determination. The recommendation 1a OBTAIN BON PASTEUR is merely suggested by the proposed drink time which specifies when the wine is anticipated to be at its best. In addition, the expression *it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age and should drink well for 12-14*, which has been taken to amount to the argumentative standpoint 1a-1 DRINK BON PASTEUR BETWEEN 2007 AND 2020, is captured linguistically by means of expressions that are not exact. The writer's commitment is softened by means of Graduation resources of Focus (see section 3.2.3): *it will benefit from* represents a softened focus and so a weaker claim than would be the case with for instance *it requires*. The grammatical construction in which the drink time specification is framed (*should drink well*) involves a marker of what is traditionally referred to as epistemic modality, which Appraisal theory treats as an option of dialogistic expansion/Entertain. The modality marker, *should*, can be seen to open up the dialogistic space for other voices which might hold contrastive views. *Will* would constitute the corresponding categorical assertion here, and simultaneously a more sharpened Focus if seen from the perspective of Graduation. In this particular context, especially as it regards the future development of this wine, I am inclined to regard *should* more as an expression of restriction in epistemic certainty, i.e. as an expression of lack of commitment to the truth of the proposition, indicating that the writer does not consider himself to have the necessary knowledge to make a categorical claim, a phenomenon that has already been discussed in chapter 5 (see sections 5.3.4 and 5.4). In accordance with Appraisal guidelines (Martin & White 2005:107–108), this type of heteroglossic option is nevertheless understood as an occurrence of Entertain. The formulation that is used, traditionally referred to as a middle construction, *it should drink well*, construes the drinkability as a property of the wine rather than as an event that requires action on the part of a consumer, which for instance “it should be drunk” would. I interpret this as a way of emphasizing that what is being issued is a recommendation and not a request. The recommendation is given for the benefit of the addressee, and the formulation chosen has the communicative function of leaving it up to readers to decide whether they should take action or not. The so called middle construction, although in its surface form involving an expression that signals restriction in epistemic certainty, could also be understood to have mildly deontic communicative potential (Paradis 2009a, Paradis 2009b), indicating that the directive is intended to benefit the addressee rather than the writer. In addition, the imprecise time specifications (*1-2* and *12-14*) can be understood as additional occurrences of dialogistic expansion/Entertain, leaving room for a slight vagueness in the prediction of the wine's prime time.

In order to capture the production-related argumentation of the Bon Pasteur review, which was represented in figure 6:3, the writer has used the following formulations:

*The home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist, Michel Rolland, and his equally talented wife, oenologist Dany Rolland, Bon Pasteur's 2003 has turned out extremely well for such a challenging vintage, better, in fact, than many Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees...*

This text is initiated by a piece of information concerning the estate that is responsible for the production of this wine. Grammatically, this information is presented by means of an elliptic construction, i.e. a detached nominal clause element that precedes, and functions to specify, a property of the subject referent (Bon Pasteur). Through the shared subject, this zeugmatic construction (Harris 2008, see also section 6.2.1) establishes a link between the preceding and the following clause elements. Several strongly attitudinal Judgement expressions are included in the nominal clause element that precedes the linking subject. *Brilliant* operates towards the higher end of the scale of capacity/competence, and *world-renowned* can be said to instantiate the maximum point on the scale of reputation. According to Harris (2008), zeugmatic structures are rhetorically useful for several reasons. First, they are economical in that repetition of the linking clause element can be avoided. Second, they create a connection between the two thoughts that are linked. In addition, this zeugmatic construction enables the Judgements of the wine makers to be textually back-grounded and presented as taken-for-granted, shared, commonsensical information, i.e. as monoglossic presupposition. Dialogistically, the proposition concerning the wine makers' capacity is presented as unproblematic for the audience. Conversely, I note that while the judgements of the oenologists are introduced as taken-for-granted, the evaluation of the wine as having *turned out extremely well*, although also occurring in a monoglossic arrangement that overlooks other potential voices, is nevertheless presented as central information that is up for debate, and hence possibly as a contentious value that requires justification. It is worth observing that the zeugma is drawn on to link the back-grounded fact that this is the home estate of two brilliant oenologists to the fore-grounded evaluation of the resulting wine as being extremely good. The rhetorical effect of the zeugma can be illustrated by means of the insertion of an additional subject. In the following constructed example, the link between the two ideas is considerably weakened:

(7:1a) Bon Pasteur is the home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist Michel Rolland and his equally talented wife Dany Rolland. The 2003 has turned out extremely well.

The zeugmatic construction nevertheless leaves part of the interpretation up to the reader, and in that sense it appears less dogmatic than a construction with an explicit connective, which 7:1b illustrates:

(7:1b) This is the home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist Michel Rolland and his equally talented wife Dany Rolland so Bon Pasteur's 2003 has turned out extremely well.

The formulation chosen by Parker can be said to be invitational in that it relies on the audience's collaboration as co-constructors of the message. On this view, the absence of the implicit connective that was reconstructed by means of argumentation analysis (see section 6.2.1) is seen as an invitation to the audience to act as co-participants. Tindale (2004:183) makes the following observation a propos of dialogical argumentation:

In a Bakhtinian model of dialogical argumentation [...] the audience is a full collaborator in the sense of a coarguer, since the moves and choices of the primary arguer, the addressor, are constrained by the responses, actual or expected, of the addressee to such a degree that utterances are co-authored, bearing traces of all participants.

The fact that the connection between the oenologists' capacity and the resulting quality of the wine is not made explicit in this text sequence also makes it less noticeable that this link is established. Since being presented as so self-evident that it does not even need to be explicated, it is difficult for the audience to reveal and resist this rhetorical attempt. The writer's investment in the strongly attitudinal Judgement expressions (upscaled by means of infused intensification) that initiate the text are subsequently further reinforced by the contrast that is construed between the wine's quality and the difficult conditions of the particular vintage. This contrast is amplified through isolated intensity items which scale up the attitudinal values: *extremely* functions to intensify the resulting quality of the product (the wine), while *such a* serves the purpose of strengthening the degree of *challenging*. The opposition between the seemingly contradictory evaluations, *extremely well* vs. *such a challenging vintage*, can be seen as a way of introducing a heteroglossic background of voices that are resistant to the positive evaluation of the wine that is being advanced. The natural expectation arising from the fact that the prerequisites of the vintage were difficult would of course be that the wine did not turn out well. This expectation is however not fulfilled, but instead countered by the surprising fact that the wine *turned out extremely well*. According to Martin & White (2005:121) "such counterings are aligning rather than disaligning since they construe the writer as sharing this axiological paradigm with the reader. The writer is presented as just as surprised by this 'exceptional' case as the reader will be". This type of countering can be seen as dialogistically contractive: The fact that divergent viewpoints are referenced gives the argumentation an air of objectivity. The dialogistic space for such alternatives is however closed down, a rhetorical strategy that positions writer and audience as fellow members of a group that recognizes but resists these alternative ideas.



The text proceeds to present the perhaps even more controversial claim that Bon Pasteur, a Bordeaux estate which is officially ranked lower, has produced a better wine, not only than *a few* or *some* other estates, but than *many* other estates that are graded higher according to the official Bordeaux classification of wine estates (see section 4.2). The item *in fact* again signals a countering. The text construes the authorial voice as sharing with the putative addressee the natural expectation that estates with higher pedigrees must also produce better wine. The fact that this expectation is not fulfilled is consequently presented as surprising. In addition to countering, *in fact* as used in this text sequence can simultaneously be seen as an instantiation of the heteroglossic option of Pronounce (see section 3.2.3), which indicates strong writer investment in the contrary value position that is being advanced. Martin & White (2005:129) suggest that “such formulations are dialogistic in that they acknowledge the presence of this counter view in the current communicative setting and are contractive in that they challenge, confront or resist this particular dialogistic alternative”. The text can thereby be said to construe an ideal reader who embraces the commonsensical view that one ought to be able to trust the French hierarchy of Pomerol estates to determine the quality of the wine.<sup>125</sup> This view is however countered, and instead it is suggested that the wine maker’s capacity is of more significant importance for the wine’s quality. Heightened values of Attitude (upscaled Judgement and Reaction/Valuation) as well as Engagement (Pronounce) construe the text’s addressor as strongly committed to the value positions put forward, thus revealing a convinced writer, i.e. an articulate and authoritative textual persona. The lack of dialogistically expansive Engagement resources indicates that the text projects a readership that is not strongly opposed to the novel view being advanced. Rather than persuading reluctant readers to adopt new points of view, the text can be understood to provide those that are already sceptical of the French way of constructing the reputation of Bordeaux wines with support for an opinion towards which they were already leaning.

I note that two field-specific non-aesthetic values are evoked in this text passage: that of vintage, i.e. weather conditions of the particular year, and that of pedigree, which is related to local standards based on the estate’s location in terms of soil, exposure to sun, micro-climate etc. as well as its long-standing reputation and wine-making expertise. It is debatable how to deal with this type of specialized values in relation to the established appraisal model.<sup>126</sup> While representing potential instances of Valuation, the terms *vintage* and *pedigree* can also be taken to belong to the system of Involvement (Martin & White 2005:35), which includes precise reckonings, for instance technical terms, ex-

<sup>125</sup> As mentioned in section 4.2, Pomerol does not have an official system of wine classification. There is however an unofficial classification of which Bon Pasteur is not part.

<sup>126</sup> In the coding of Attitude of the whole data set, these instances were treated as occurrences of the subcategories of Location (*pedigree*) and Miscellaneous (*vintage*), respectively.

act numbers or proper names, that can indicate Attitude. These phenomena are considered to be part of discourse semantics, but are not dealt with as part of the Appraisal system. According to Martin (2003:146, footnote), Involvement serves the interpersonal function of including or excluding interlocutors. It is clear that Parker makes frequent use of resources that must be treated under Involvement in Martin & White's (2005) outline. The function of these resources seems multifaceted and therefore deserves attention. According to White (1998:38), Involvement is of importance for the ways in which solidarity between the writer and his audience is construed. Specialized lexis, for instance, can be used to signal knowledge emanating from shared membership in a discourse community. In this text section, Involvement resources function to construe the writer and the intended audience as fellow members in a culture of cultivated consumption, who are comfortable with expressions like *oenologist*, *vintage* and *pedigree*, and who are already aware of the conditions of this Pomerol vintage as well as Bon Pasteur's lack of pedigree.<sup>127</sup> In view of the socio-cultural arena that hosts the present communicative activity, i.e. the importance of wine for the construction of the consumer's identity, Involvement resources can be understood to appeal to the audience's desire to see themselves, and be seen by others, as discriminate and knowledgeable initiates.

It is somewhat problematic to classify the attitudinal expression *turned out extremely well* with respect to Attitude subcategories. Is this to be regarded as an occurrence of aesthetic, emotional, subjective, interpersonally oriented Reaction or an instance of non-aesthetic, objective, ideationally oriented Valuation relating to community standards? As pointed out above, this ambiguity has previously been discussed by Bednarek (2009) and Kaltenbacher (2006). Although causing problems in the coding of Attitude of the whole data set, this inherent ambiguity is understood as rather intriguing. The choice between the two subcategories of Appreciation seems to depend on whether or not the writer resorts to community standards when issuing his evaluation. The question then arises what these community standards are, and who gets to define them in the field of wine. On his website Parker maintains that "wine is no different from any consumer product. There are specific standards of quality that full-time wine professionals recognize..." (*The Wine Advocate*. Robert Parker's rating system). However, not everyone subscribes to this view. According to Johnson (2005:43–44), the criteria that Parker applies are not the only ones, even if he presents them as if they were. In order to take into consideration the objectivity/subjectivity ambiguity of this type of semantically underspecified evaluative expressions, which occur frequently in Parker's texts (see figure 7:2), they are incorporated in a subcategory labelled Reaction/Valuation. As observed in section 6.2.1, the semantically underspecified assessment of the Bon Pasteur 2003 as having turned out extremely well has

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<sup>127</sup> See also the notion of 'members' resources' in for instance Fairclough (1992) and Don (2007).

been interpreted as a formulation which functions to instantiate the normative standpoint 1b.

In order to dress up the descriptive-evaluative argumentation of the Bon Pasteur review (see figure 6:4), the following formulations has been used by the writer:

*Sweet black raspberries, cherries, and smoky herb aromas jump from the glass of this tasty, round, moderately tannic, succulent, low acid Pomerol. Lush, medium-bodied, and sensual...*

The assessment of the wine's smell, the nose, which introduces the surface form of the descriptive-evaluative unit, is experientially tuned, i.e. the description cannot be said to include explicitly evaluative lexis. As observed in section 5.3.3, the aromas are portrayed as emanating from the wine instead of being perceived by the taster. This perspective makes the description come across as objective and taster-independent, as if olfactory perception was a rational rather than physical/perceptual phenomenon. Graduation can perhaps be understood to be present here in that olfactory perceptions are described by means of a list of specific olfactory components: *sweet black raspberries, cherries and smoky herb aromas*. This list can be interpreted as a way of using Quantification to invoke Attitude: Appreciation: Composition: Complexity. Based on investigation of the whole data set, the degree of complexity indicated by this particular list can be specified as being medium/high. The description of the olfactory complexity of the 2005 Certan de May, for example, is captured by means of the following list: *camphor, creosote, plums, black cherry liqueur, currents, licorice and pain grille*. This formulation is understood to convey a higher degree of complexity of the wine's aromatics.

The degree of intensity of the wine's smell is indicated by means of the motion verb *jump*, which operates on the scale of force of motion, contrasting with for instance *glide* or *emanate* (Caballero 2007).<sup>128</sup> Based on Caballero's investigation, *jump* can be understood to express a high degree of force of motion and hence of intensity in the wine's aromatics. This can again be seen as a rational rather than physical/perceptual account of the wine's smell in the sense that the description is detached from any experiencer and does not involve explicitly evaluative lexis signalling the presence of a human evaluator.

While I regard the establishment of communal values with respect to wine quality as the main argumentative function of the descriptive-evaluative unit, it could be argued that this thematic unit also has an entertainment function, which has been observed by Lehrer (2007, see section 2.2). Whereas in my account, an expression like *jump from the glass* has been regarded as a more or less lexicalized expression used in wine jargon to signal degree of intensity of

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<sup>128</sup> Graduation of processes is termed Enhancement in Appraisal theory (see section 3.2.3).

the wine's smell, the formulation can simultaneously be seen to instantiate what Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1412a) termed *energeia*, i.e. a type of personification involving activity. The use of a motion verb in this context also contributes to the argumentation's animation in a way that a straightforward presentation of the argumentative proposition, i.e. "this wine's smell is intense" would not. Figurative language allows the arguer to combine understanding with feeling in such a way that they are not distinguishable from one another, which in Reboul's (1989:178) view makes the figurative expression "stronger than the argument it condenses". The argumentative intensity value that the formulation has been deemed to instantiate and the bringing-before-the-eyes phenomenon achieved by the figure of *energeia* are not mutually exclusive, but can be expected to work in parallel to combine reason with entertainment so that the two notions cannot be separated. It can however be detrimental for the credibility of the writer's discursive persona should the ambition to entertain become too obvious. This would risk promoting the writer's ego in the role of witty entertainer at the expense of the prime purpose of the reviews, i.e. to provide the audience with succinct consumption recommendations. The following wine description from the *Financial Times*, which provides a contrastive example, has been the cause of ridicule in the media (Shapin 2005):

(7:2) This dark wine...helicopters into the mouth with spinning blades of intense fruit.

In other words, stylistic figures that are understood as part of the argumentation can increase the text's persuasiveness, while ornamentation that is not perceived as argumentatively justified risks coming across as mere embellishment, or "misplaced poetry" (Reboul 1989:169). The comments made about Parker's wine writing as "prose so plain and clear that it reads like a subway map" and "no-nonsense, just-the-flavors-ma'am" (see section 1.1) can be taken to signal that his use of this type of stylistic figures has not been perceived as misplaced poetry.

Furthermore, the string *moderately tannic...low acid...medium-bodied* specifies the gustatory and tactile dimensions established in wine tasting (body, acidity and astringency) as being at the desired level, which according to Lehrer (1975:904–906, 2007:129) is somewhere close to the centre of the scales, i.e. too much as well as too little is considered to be negative (see section 2.2). As indicated in section 6.2.1, the combination of factual terms that Parker uses in this string is taken to express the argumentative proposition 1.2.2.1 THE WINE'S TASTE IS BALANCED, which entails a positive evaluation of the gustatory experience of the wine. The evidence put forward is nevertheless of a factual, experiential character. Based on Parker's glossary of wine terms, *round...succulent...lush*, which interact with the factual specifications of the wine's gustatory components in the surface form of the message, have been interpreted as occurrences of what is termed 'inscribed Attitude' in Appraisal

theory. The basis of these items is understood to be physical/perceptual evaluation rather than experiential evidence. The physical/perceptual evaluations function to direct the evaluative reading of the combination of facts, aligning the reader into the value position that the perceptual experience of this wine's palate is pleasant to the senses of taste and mouthfeel.<sup>129</sup> The fact that a number of near-synonymous items are used intensifies the positive attitudinal meaning of Composition, reinforcing the idea that the wine's taste is perceptually pleasant. This could be taken to affect the argumentative strength of 1.2.2 so that the argumentative proposition could be reconstructed as THE WINE IS VERY PLEASANT TO THE SENSE OF TASTE (see section 6.2.1).

In the surface form of the message, the physical evaluations and descriptive accounts pertaining to the wine's palate are embraced by what has been regarded as emotionally oriented Attitude, instantiated by the items *tasty...sensual*. In the Appraisal model this type of Appreciation items are labelled Reaction. They refer to the writer's emotional response to the wine, but the emotions have been transferred from the evaluator to the product that is being evaluated. The feelings are thereby "institutionalized" (Martin & White 2005). Although instantiated as Appreciation and not Affect, the items *tasty* and *sensual* are nevertheless taken to signal Parker's emotional investment: He is not just an expert, he is a person who thoroughly enjoys and takes intense pleasure in tasting and drinking wine.

As observed in section 7.1, the original Appraisal system of Attitude proposes two subcategories of Reaction: Quality, which refers to evaluations of whether we like something or not, and Impact, which concerns evaluations regarding whether something grabs our attention or not (Martin & White 2005, see section 7.1). Bednarek (2008:176, 182 footnote, 2009 171–172) maintains that the category of Reaction constitutes a bridge between Appreciation and Affect, and treats certain occurrences of Appreciation/Reaction as 'covert affect', namely lexis that explicitly comprises the evaluator's response as part of the meaning content. Since I find Martin & White's definition of the distinction between Quality and Impact difficult to uphold, I take the category of Impact to be delimited to instances of lexis realizing evaluator response, i.e. locutions that are referred to as 'covert affect' by Bednarek. The significance of Impact or 'covert affect' will be further discussed below, where potential instantiations of this Reaction subcategory are encountered. I take *tasty* to be an instance of the

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<sup>129</sup> As pointed out in section 7.1, my interpretation of these occurrences relies on a combination of the meanings of the terms listed in different wine glossaries and contextual understanding. Depending on contextual knowledge, another analyst might be inclined to categorize these items differently. Interestingly, Dr Don's (see Don & Hommerberg, 2010, 2011 and forthcoming) spontaneous choice was to regard this string of evaluations as instantiations of the more emotionally oriented Reaction category. Conversely, as observed by Dr Forceville in response to my presentation at the conference Media, Cognition and Communication, Braga, Portugal 25 September 2009, professional wine tasters/writers may also interpret these items as having an experientially oriented, quite specific meaning.

subcategory of Quality. Furthermore, it is difficult to fit *sensual* into either of the two Reaction subcategories proposed by the original subsystem of Appreciation/Reaction. Items like *sensual* express emotional evaluation by drawing on association. As noted in sections 6.2.1, 6.3 and 7.1, such associative lexis is of importance for the construction of a joint addressor-audience identity.

In the descriptive-evaluative unit, Graduation can be seen to serve the purpose of providing the evaluations with enthusiasm and energy. By revealing his passion, the writer engages the readers as fellow enthusiasts. The quantification of olfactory components and intensification of gustatory sensations through lists of near-synonymous adjectives can of course also be seen to draw attention to these aspects of the message thereby highlighting the writer's extraordinary perceptual capabilities in being able to perceive all these fine organoleptic distinctions, hence also contributing to the construction of the writer's self image. As observed above, the demonstration of practical wisdom is one of three key components of a persuasive ethos, the other two being virtue and good will. The division into several olfactory components simultaneously promotes a particular conceptualization of a wine's smell, thereby encouraging the putative audience to perceive the wine's smell in a decomposed manner.

In terms of dialogistic positioning, the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Bon Pasteur review is monoglossic. It is worth noting that the seemingly factual description of the wine's smell is portrayed as novel information, guiding the prospective reader to take specific notice of the olfactory depiction. This contrasts with the presentation of the emotional/associative evaluation (Reaction), which occurs in attributive position in back-grounded noun phrases introduced by the definite article, *this tasty...sensual*, suggesting presupposed, taken-for-granted and thus already shared Attitude that is not at issue, i.e. the reader's agreement is assumed. A reversed arrangement does not seem to be impossible, i.e. "This complex, intense wine is tasty", but this alternative has not been opted for.

In the argumentation analysis performed in section 6.2.1, the consumption-oriented unit, which is represented below, has been regarded as having possible argumentative significance (see figure 6:5).

*...it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age and should drink well for 12-14.*

The possible attitudinal values associated with the wine's potential to develop (1-2 years) as well as its estimated durability (12-14) are not seen as aesthetic but rather as referring to field-specific values and therefore as being possible instantiations of the Attitude subcategory of Valuation.<sup>130</sup> Although these values

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<sup>130</sup> As pointed out in section 7.1, the Valuation subcategories Potential to develop and Durability are added to the Attitude scheme to enable listing of items which have potential attitudinal significance

can perhaps be understood to be invoked by the formulation, there are no indications in the text as to the orientation of a potential evaluative reading. Instead, it is left up to prospective readers to decide for themselves whether the consumption-oriented locutions should be given an evaluative reading or not, based on the evidence provided by the predicted consumption span.

This concludes the Appraisal analysis of the Bon Pasteur review. The table below provides an overview of the categorizations that were brought up in the exploratory discussion conducted throughout section 7.1.2. The argument notations are included in the table in order to clarify the connection between the preceding argumentation analysis and the current Appraisal analysis of the same review. Furthermore, inscribed instances of evaluation are marked in bold while those that have been regarded as invoked occurrences are underlined.

**Table 7:1 Overview of the Appraisal analysis of Bon Pasteur 2003**

Arg. not.	Text/ target of evaluation	Attitude	Pos/neg	Graduation	Dialogistic positioning
1b +1.1	<i>Bon Pasteur's 2003 has turned out extremely well</i> Wine's overall quality	<b>Appreciation</b> Reaction/ valuation	+	Force: medium/high degree	Monogloss: assertion
1b-1	<u>89</u> wine's overall quality	<u>Appreciation:</u> Reaction? Valuation? Involvement?	(+)	Force: medium degree	Monogloss: assertion
+1.1.1	<i>The home estate of the brilliant, world-renowned oenologist, Michel Rolland, and his equally talented wife, oenologist Dany Rolland oenologists</i>	<b>judgement</b>  <b>judgement</b>	+  +	force infused intens. high degree maximization comparison	Monogloss: presupposition
-1.1.1	<i>for such a challenging vintage, vintage conditions</i>	<b>Appreciation</b> Valuation/ Miscellaneous	-	force isol. intens high degree	Heterogloss: contract Counter
+1.1.1.2	<i>better, in fact, than many Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees</i> wine in relation to other wines	<b>Appreciation</b> Reaction/ valuation	+	comparative	Heterogloss: contract counter + pronounce
-1.1.2	<i>Pomerol estates with higher pedigrees</i> Bon Pasteur's pedigree	Appreciation: Valuation/location	-		

with respect to these field-specific values. Since the attitudinal orientation of these potential values is unclear in the case of the Bon Pasteur review, these instances are excluded from the schematic overview of Parker's attitudinal profile represented in figure 7.2.

+1.1.1.1 and +1.1.1.2	(implied) Bon Pasteur's oenologists		(+)	Reinforced by comparative ( <i>better</i> ) and quant. ( <i>many Pomerol estates</i> )	
+1.2a	<i>this tasty...Pomerol</i> wine in relation to taster's emotional response	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction Quality	+	Force infused intens. medium degree	Monogloss: presupposition
+1.2a-1	<i>...sensual</i> wine in relation to associations	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction Association	+	Force infused intens. medium degree	
+1.2.1.1	<i>...sweet black raspberries, cherries, and smoky herb aromas</i> wine's smell independent of experimenter	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Complexity	+		
+1.2.1.2	<i>...jump from the glass...</i> wine's smell independent of experimenter	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Intensity	+	Force enhancement high degree	
+1.2.2	<i>...round...succulent...lush</i> wine's palate in relation to taster's sensory response	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Unspecified	+	Force intens. repetition	
+1.2.2.1	<i>Moderately tannic...low acid...medium-bodied</i> wine's palate independent of experimenter	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Balance	+		
+1.3a	<i>...it will benefit from 1-2 more years of bottle age</i> wine's potential to develop	<u>Appreciation</u> Valuation: Potential to develop	?		Heterogloss: Expand: Entertain
+1.3b	<i>...and should drink well for 12-14.</i> wine's durability	<u>Appreciation</u> Valuation: Durability	?		Heterogloss: Expand: Entertain

## 7.2.2 CHÂTEAU ANGÉLUS 2005

The next text to be scrutinized reviews Château Angélu 2005 from St Émilion, a wine that Parker has judged to be of higher quality than Château Bon Pasteur 2003. The highly appreciative assessment of the wine is captured by means of the expression *the most profound Angelus* (understood as expressing the superordinate normative standpoint 1b) and the numerical score 96-98+ (which instantiates the subordinate normative standpoint 1b-1) (see figure 6.6).



In terms of Appraisal categories, the Reaction/Valuation ambiguity of the numerical score has already been pointed out in the analysis of the Bon Pasteur review above. It has also been mentioned that many readers have had a tendency to interpret the numerical score as objective Valuation or even absolute truth. In contrast to the numerical expression 89, which was understood to instantiate the normative standpoint of the Bon Pasteur review, the vagueness of the presentation of the Angélu review's numerical score, i.e. 96-98+, leaves some room for divergent viewpoints with respect to the qualitative assessment of this wine. The expression in which the numerical evaluation is framed can be seen to involve an element of epistemic uncertainty, regarded as heterogloss in Appraisal. The dialogistic space suggested by the formulation is perhaps to be seen as contractive rather than expansive, since the room for divergent viewpoints is specified as tightly limited. The expression instantiating the prescriptive standpoints 1a and 1a-1 (see figure 6.6) will be discussed below.

The formulations occurring in the production-related unit of the Angélu review are reproduced in italics below:

*Could this be the most profound Angelus yet made by the brilliant Hubert de Bouard since he turned this once under-achieving estate around in the mid-eighties? A blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc...(7080 cases, 14.5% natural alcohol)...*

This text is initiated by a superlative evaluation of this wine as being among the most well made from this estate. As observed above, the expression *the most profound Angelus* has been regarded as an instance of the semantically underspecified subcategory of Reaction/Valuation. The initial attitudinal proposition is presented as an expository question, which means that resources from the dialogistically expansive category of Entertain have been drawn on (Martin & White 2005:104–106). By means of this rhetorical strategy, the space for alternative voices is expanded. While the space for other voices is limited to those that hold a positive view of Château Angélu, it does incorporate those, possibly including the writer himself, who may hold another Angélu to be the most profound. The problem to decide which Angélu is the most profound supposedly arises from the implicit understanding that this estate has turned out so many equally well-made wines. In addition, the item *yet* introduces the idea that in the near future the profound 2005 will be competing with even more profound wines made by this producer. The analysis of the whole data set shows that dialogistically expansive Entertain resources are frequently drawn on by Parker to present general, semantically underspecified Appreciation (Reaction/Valuation). The following examples all illustrate this phenomenon, albeit dressed up in different formulations:

(7:3) *A candidate for the finest wine produced at this chateau...*

- (7:4) *I'm not going out on a limb* saying the 2005 Ausone is better than the 2003, 2000, etc., but it is certainly at the same level.
- (7:5) *I don't believe* I have ever tasted a better d'Angludet than this 2005.
- (7:6) The finest Carbonnieux *I have ever tasted*...
- (7:7) A superb effort from this Pomerol estate, the 2005 *ranks alongside* their outstanding 2000, 1990, and 1982.

This type of dialogistic expansion in the presentation of instances of Reaction/Valuation provides Parker's rhetoric with an air of objectivity, leaving room for the putative readers to hold slightly divergent viewpoints while still being included as members in the group that is being addressed by the text. Such comparisons with other vintages from these estates also function to construe the intended audience as members of a group with extensive experience, for whom the comparisons are meaningful and who can therefore hold on to a slightly deviating idea.

The producer that is responsible for making the 2005 Angélu, Hubert de Bouard, is praised by means of inscribed Judgement, which indicates strong commitment on the part of the writer to the positive attitude towards this producer. It is worth observing that this strongly positive Judgment is presented as textually back-grounded information taken for granted as shared between the writer and the addressee. The positive attitude towards the producer is reinforced by the negative assessment of the previous management of this estate that is advanced in the following subclause. This too is presented by means of a linguistic construction that entails presupposition, i.e. the audience is construed as already in total agreement with the writer in his negative assessment of the previous management of Château Angélu. I note that while the judgement of the present producer refers to a specified person who is provided with a name, the previous management is introduced by means of a metonymy, i.e. *estate* functions to represent the conscious human beings in charge of the operation. In the coding of Attitude of the whole material, both these instances have been classified as occurrences of inscribed Judgement (see section 7.1). This is perhaps not entirely uncontroversial from the perspective of Appraisal theory. The problem of distinguishing between Appreciation and Judgement is brought up in Martin & White (2005:59–60) and discussed by ben-Aaron (2005a and 2005b). While it has been felt appropriate to regard instances such as *under-achieving estate* as Judgement in the schematic characterization of Parker's attitudinal profile, it is nonetheless of interest to note that the positive evaluation of the current producer's capacity is instantiated as Judgement and the negative attitude towards the previous management of Angélu is projected onto a thing (*estate*) rather than a particular person.

The rest of the production-related unit provides information which is seemingly entirely factual. Nevertheless, the selection of these particular technical details among a number of possible options could have implications for the evaluative organization of the message. While these formulations seem free of attitudinal charge from the perspective of the production-related unit, they nevertheless give rise to anticipations of the experience of drinking the wine, and in that sense they can possibly also be seen as tokens of evaluation from the point of view of the descriptive-evaluative unit. This is suggested by the surface form of the text, where the parenthetical information, (*7080 cases, 14.5% natural alcohol*), is inserted in the text section that is otherwise mainly devoted description-evaluation of an immediate perceptual experience. It is not entirely clear to me what the evaluative potential of the expression *7,080 cases* might be. Since the average production at Angélu is 7,500 cases, 7,080 cases could be taken to represent a low figure for this estate's production.<sup>131</sup> This piece of seemingly factual information may invoke anticipation of a wine that is intense and concentrated due to low yields. The importance of low yields as a basis for positive evaluations will be further discussed in section 7.2.5. Similarly, *14.5% natural alcohol*, an unusually high degree of alcohol content for a Bordeaux wine, also adds to the anticipation of a wine that will be perceived as intense by the senses of taste and mouthfeel. It is of dialogistic significance that these facts are delivered without accompanying values. It is thereby assumed that 'the facts will speak for themselves' so that the putative reader will automatically supply the factual material with the intended positive values (Martin & White 2005:224), presumably that production aspects that result in a wine that is perceived as concentrated, such as limited yields and a high alcohol content, should be seen as desirable. The factual nature of the formulations can be seen as an invitation to the audience to collaborate with the writer in the construction of a shared value, a value that the audience is expected to arrive at through a process of self persuasion based on the evidence provided. The rhetorical strategy employed by the writer in this review can be understood to correlate with the technique employed by the Sophists, which Tindale (2004:50) describes in the following way:

One compelling feature of the arguments of Gorgias and Antiphon [...] is the way they invite the audience to experience things through their own eyes so that if they are to be persuaded, they will be so on their own terms, from a perspective they have helped construct and see as plausible, rather than one imposed on them.

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<sup>131</sup> The information concerning the annual production of Angélu has been retrieved from the website of Château Angélu which is available at <http://www.chateau-angelus.com/>. Date of access 15 September 2009.

Similarly, while not explicitly stated, the fact that the wine is dominated by the Merlot grape (*a blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc*) can perhaps also be understood to invoke expectations of an opaque intensely-coloured wine.<sup>132</sup>

Furthermore, the specification of the alcohol level as being *natural* refers to a non-aesthetic value, i.e. a subtype of Valuation. The aspect that is emphasized here is the fact that the wine achieved such a high degree of alcohol because it was made from ripe grapes. Artificial addition of alcohol would not have been praised in the same way (unless of course it was done covertly without being noticed by the taster/writer). The general topos that is being evoked by the item *natural* is “That which is natural is better than that which is artificial”. According to Deroy (2007:102) naturalness is an important value for wine amateurs, who generally show little interest in chemistry and prefer to ignore the fact that modern scientific techniques are of ever-growing importance in today’s wine production. References to this attitudinal value in the whole data set are subsumed under the Valuation subcategory of Naturalness (see figures 7:1 and 7:2).

While drawing on the audience’s collaboration to contribute the shared values that are merely suggested by the presentation of factual evidence, the very selection of these particular facts and the self-evidence by means of which they are presented construes a discourse community that is in total agreement about, and sees as commonsensical, what constitutes desirable qualities in a Bordeaux wine. In reality, however, opinions diverge considerably. Johnson (2005:43) for instance holds that wines should have “the lowest alcohol content compatible with flavour and satisfaction” and that the concentrated wines that are promoted by Parker may “threaten headaches”. In Johnson’s view, the preference for concentrated wines is the result of tasting wines in line-ups rather than drinking wine with food – this procedure will inevitably upgrade concentrated wines at the expense of the more delicate ones which will just seem feeble in comparison (Johnson 2005:42). As already mentioned, this divergence of ideas is however not addressed in the text by means of resources that introduce a heteroglossic backdrop of other voices. Instead, the text shows no attention to such alternative viewpoints, and in that sense can be said to project an addressee that is in complete consensus with the author regarding the production details that are relevant for a wine of high quality. Several sources comment on the fact that Parker’s influence among wine consumers has resulted in a different style of wine, particularly in Bordeaux, namely a more concentrated style with higher alcohol level, popularly referred to as Parkerized wines (e.g. McCoy 2005, Johnson 2005, Fiering 2008, see section 1.1).

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<sup>132</sup> It is interesting to note that the 2003 Angélus (58% Cabernet Franc and 42% Merlot), which is also included among the data set review, is ranked lower than the 2005, perhaps partly on the basis that “it incorporates the highest percentage of Cabernet Franc ever utilized at Angelus”.

Let us now consider the descriptive-evaluative argumentation of the Angé-lus review. The formulations reproduced in italics below are used to express the intricate argumentative hierarchy that was abstracted by means of argumentation analysis and presented in figure 6:8 in the preceding chapter.

*...the spectacular, inky/blue/purple-hued 2005 (7,080 cases; 14.5% natural alcohol) exhibits an extraordinary projected nose of blueberries, blackberries, liqueur of minerals, flowers, and subtle, toasty new oak. Magnificently concentrated, displaying a seamless integration of acidity, wood, tannin, and alcohol, a soaring mid-palate, and a finish that lasts over 60 seconds...*

The initial upgraded instance of subjective Appreciation: Reaction, *spectacular*, is presented as textually back-grounded, i.e. as monoglossic presupposition, which construes the author and the prospective reader as likeminded wine appreciators. It is however worth observing that the initial evaluation of the wine as being one of the most profound from this estate can be seen as justifying the presentation of this occurrence of subjective Reaction as back-grounded and already taken for granted by the addressee, whose collaboration was invited by means of the initial expository question (*Could this be the most profound*). While the projected addressee was thereby provided with the opportunity to express a (slightly) divergent position with respect to the comparative overall assessment of this wine, the idea that it is *spectacular* is nevertheless presented as unproblematic, i.e. as a shared value.

Furthermore, the specification of the wine's colour as being *inky/blue/purple-hued* is seemingly a purely factual description of the wine's colour. The fact that three descriptors have been used can nevertheless be seen as an instance of intensification through repetition of near-synonymous items. For those with some experience of the normal colour of red wine, which presumably includes most of Parker's readers, the items selected, *inky/blue/purple*, conjure the idea of an unusually dark-coloured wine. Furthermore, the preceding up-graded attitudinal item *spectacular* provides the colour specification with positive evaluative flavour, aligning readers into the commonsensical idea that a saturated colour is self-evidently a desirable quality in a Bordeaux wine. In reality, the discourse community is diversified in regard of this aspect: In Langewiesche's (2000) article, an anonymous producer, who is critical of Parker's enterprise, maintains that Bordeaux wine is supposed to be red, not black. This diversity is however not taken into consideration by the text, which construes the discourse community as unproblematically unified with respect to what is a desirable colour of a red Bordeaux wine.

While the emotionally oriented Reaction value *spectacular* as well as the colour specification is textually back-grounded, i.e. presented as monoglossic presupposition, the description-evaluation of the olfactory impression of the wine is introduced by means of an assertion leading the reader to interpret this aspect of the message as the most central. As was the case with Château Bon

Pasteur 2003, the complexity of the 2005 Château Angelus is also portrayed by means of a list of olfactory descriptors. Since the items used to describe Angelus are more numerous, I take the formulation *blueberries, blackberries, liqueur of minerals, flowers, and subtle, toasty new oak* to represent an upgrading of the Composition value of Complexity. It is worth observing that this description as well as the one pertaining to Château Bon Pasteur, which was scrutinized in the preceding subsection, includes the connective *and*. This gives the impression of definiteness and exactness: The wine has precisely the six aroma components that the writer has listed, none more, none less. This contrasts with the description of the 2003 Château Ausone: *an extraordinary perfume of flowers, crushed rocks, sweet raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, ...* While this description includes five specific aroma components, the commas between all of them indicate that the list is perhaps not complete. This effect is reinforced by the addition *and God knows what else* which gives the impression of endless multiplicity. The accumulation of different surface forms functioning to instantiate the Composition subcategory of Complexity in the whole data set shows that the material includes only one occurrence of this rhetorical device, namely the one that was found in the Ausone 2003 review. Examples (7:8)–(7:15) below, which are all taken from diverse corpus reviews, illustrate how enumerations of aroma components are employed by the writer to express degrees of complexity from low to high. The numerical scores of the wines that have inspired these olfactory depictions are given in parenthesis.

- (7:8) fruity (85pp)
- (7:9) spicy (86pp)
- (7:10) sweet and sour red cherry (86pp)
- (7:11) sweet red and black fruits (87-89pp)
- (7:12) mocha, black cherry, and herb-like characteristics (87pp)
- (7:13) black cherry and current fruit along with licorice, herbs, and spice box characteristics (88pp)
- (7:14) camphor, creosote, plums, black cherry liqueur, currents, licorice and pain grille (93-95pp)
- (7:15) flowers, crushed rocks, sweet raspberries, blackberries, blueberries, and God knows what else (100pp)

The descriptions provided in these examples suggest that there is a fairly close correlation between the number of aroma components and the numerical rating of the wine, so that more numerous aroma components are associated with a higher numerical score, i.e. a more positive assessment of the wine.

The text goes on to praise the intensity of the wine's taste: *magnificently concentrated*. Again, I note the recurrent tendency to present expressions from the subjective Attitude subcategory of Reaction as textually backgrounded. While amplifying *concentrated*, the item *magnificently* simultaneously reproduces as self-evident and commonsensical the idea that a high degree of con-

centration is a desirable characteristic of the taste of a Bordeaux wine. In other words, the discourse community of wine is presented as so unified in this idea that it does not need to be brought to the foreground, presented as up for debate and asserted in the present context. In reality, it is however not the case that the discourse community is unified, which the following quotations from Johnson (2005:43, 238) indicate:

To [Parker] ‘viscous’ – of a red Bordeaux – is a term of praise. It makes me shudder...this is the only region in the world [...] whose genius lies in making great light wine – light on the palate, light on the spirits, light on the constitution – great in its best moments, nonetheless, by any definition except that of blockbuster.

The text proceeds to deal with the compositional aspect of balance, i.e. how the gustatory components interact on the palate. Here maximization is used to indicate the writer’s satisfaction with the integration of gustatory components: *displaying a seamless integration of acidity, wood, tannin, and alcohol*. I have been uncertain whether to regard this instance of Graduation as Focus or Force. If *integration* is seen as belonging to a category which has different types of integrations as its members, *seamless integration* represents Focus: sharpen, i.e. the expression can be understood to construe this particular integration as a perfect or core member of the category of integrations. On the other hand, *seamless integration* can also be seen as the maximum point on a scale of goodness: good – great – perfect/seamless. It is debatable whether it is useful to keep up the distinction between Focus and Force when analyzing occurrences like this one. Pomerantz (2007:309) in fact discusses both types of maximizers under the same heading: ‘extreme case formulations’. This seems reasonable in view of the fact that there does not appear to be any significant communicative difference between the two types: Both construe the addresser as strongly committed to the value position that is being advanced.

Furthermore, although it does not appear in Parker’s glossary of wine terms, *soaring* has been interpreted as an expression indicating Composition: Intensity. Intensity is thus a recurrent evaluative theme throughout this text, starting with the *inky/blue/purple* colour, continuing with the *projected nose* and an appraisal of the wine as being *magnificently concentrated*, which is then followed by the expression *soaring mid-palate*. The investigation of Parker’s attitudinal profile, which was presented in figure 7:2, shows a significant peak for the Composition category of Intensity. While the schematic representation has already revealed that Intensity is a prevalent compositional value in Parker’s writing, the interpretive scrutiny of this text suggests that Intensity is a particularly important theme in reviews of highly ranked wines.

The descriptive-evaluative unit closes with an assessment of the wine’s gustatory impression as being persistent: *a finish that lasts over 60 seconds*. Here, the presentation is purely factual, which signals that the facts are so persuasive

that no attitudinal indicators are necessary, i.e. the facts will ‘speak for themselves’ (Martin & White 2005:224, see also Tindale 2004:50). This type of implicit attitudinal positioning through seemingly factual expositions is a frequently used evaluative strategy in Parker’s reviews. In the annotation of the whole data set, these occurrences are classified as invoked Appreciation (see section 7.1).

The next thematic unit in the Angélus review concerns the wine’s potential to develop and estimated durability. A possible argumentative outline of this review’s consumption-oriented unit was offered in figure 6:9. In order to express this future-oriented argumentation the following formulations are used:

*...it is a wine of compelling potential. Anticipated maturity: 2010-2030+.*

As already observed in the analysis of the review of Bon Pasteur above, when the future development of the wine is being addressed the text employs heteroglossic resources of Entertain. While the Entertain resources referenced by Martin & White (2005:104–111) are mostly grammatical, the choices opted for here are lexical expressions whose meanings incorporate an element of dialogistic expansion/epistemic uncertainty: The item *potential*, although upgraded by the amplifying expression *compelling*, can be seen as a modalizing locution used by the writer to indicate that his certainty regarding the wine’s future development is limited. The same is true of *anticipated*, which can be understood to indicate an expectation presumably based on ever so careful calculation, but still involving a lack of commitment to the absolute truth of the prediction. The deletion of *anticipated* (i.e. simply *Maturity 2010-2030*) would have resulted in a corresponding monoglossic expression, but this alternative has not been opted for. The rhetorical strategy used by Parker when referring to the wine’s durability can be contrasted with the British wine magazine *Decanter’s* approach, which is completely monoglossic: *Drink 2009-2014*.<sup>133</sup> According to Martin & White (2005:107), Entertain resources signal that “the proposition is grounded in an explicit subjectivity and is thereby construed as but one position among a range of alternative positions”. Furthermore, in addition to assessing the potential to develop and prospective durability of this wine, another important aspect of this part of the text is that it functions to instantiate the prescriptive standpoint, i.e. to provide the audience with advice as to when to consume this wine, and so supposedly also recommending them to obtain it. The discursive role of recommendations is to offer advice that is beneficial for the addressee (Paradis 2009b). For credibility to be established, it is crucial in the present context that the audience perceives the advice provided by Parker as beneficial to them

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<sup>133</sup> This example is copied from the review of Tapanappa, Tiers Vineyard Chardonnay, Adelaide Hills 2007 found on Decanter’s website. Available at <http://www.decanter.com/recommendations/>. Date of access 30 July 2009. The monoglossic variant, *Drink: 2010-2030*, also occurs in the heading of Parker’s reviews.



rather than to the writer himself or some other party, for instance the wine producer. Paradis (2009b) suggests that the “weakly deontic” discourse function of recommendations in combination with the epistemic uncertainty pertaining to predictions of the future has implications for the types of linguistic expressions that are used: The expressions that are selected to instantiate recommendations display a low degree of transitivity, i.e. since neither the speaker nor the addressee are encoded as participants actively performing the future drink event, the constructions used are characterized by a mid-degree of transfer of action. In the Bon Pasteur text, this phenomenon is illustrated by the middle construction *it [...] should drink well*, where the wine is depicted as simultaneously performing the action and being affected by it. In the Angélu text, the nominal expression *Anticipated maturity 2010-3030+*, while assessing the durability of the wine, is also taken to have the discursive function of recommendation addressed to the prospective addressee. The exhortational discourse function, i.e. suggesting to readers what they should want to do, which was reconstructed as the prescriptive standpoints 1a-1 and 1a in figure 6:6, nonetheless has to be inferred by the audience.

As observed above, the numerical score for this wine is as high as 96-98+. This indicates that Parker has ranked Château Angélu 2005 as an almost perfect wine, i.e. as displaying all the characteristics that are desirable in a wine. Throughout the analysis of the production-related and experience-based arguments of this review, I have observed that intensity and concentration have been a consistent theme. The audience is thereby encouraged to share the writer’s ideal in wine taste, i.e. that a more concentrated wine results in a high degree of appreciation, an ideal that they have ostensibly been invited to arrive at on their own terms. While Parker’s portrayal of Angélu may appear as the only way to describe this estate and their wines, the image given on Angélu’s official website assigns considerably more importance to the estate’s proud heritage, glorious history and preservation of identity, involving a high percentage of the Cabernet Franc grape variety as an important aspect of this wine’s characteristics.<sup>134</sup>

This closes the analytic discussion of the review of Château Angélu 2005. The Appraisal categorizations that were drawn on to assist the analysis are summarized in the table below, which is also designed to explicate the link to the preceding argumentation analysis.

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<sup>134</sup> Angélu official website is available at <http://www.angelus.com/>. Date of access 29 July 2011.

**Table 7:2 Overview of the Appraisal analysis of Angélus 2005**

Arg. not.	Text/ target of evaluation	Attitude	Pos/ neg	Graduation	Dialogistic positioning
1b +1.1 +1.1.1.1	<i>Could this be the most profound Angélus wine's overall quality</i>	<b>Appreciation</b> Reaction/ Valuation	+	Force: isolated intens. Superlative Maximization	Heterogloss: Expand: Entertain
1b-1	<i>(96-98+)</i> wine's overall quality	<u>Appreciation:</u> Reaction? Valuation? Involvement?	(+)	Force: high degree	Heterogloss: Contract?
+1.1.1	<i>...by the brilliant Hubert de Bouard owner/oenologist</i>	<b>Judgement</b>	+	Force infused intens. High degree	Monogloss: presupposition
+1.1.1.2	<i>...since he turned this once under-achieving estate around</i> previous management, previous oenologist, present owner/oenologist	<b>Judgement</b>  <u>Judgement of present owner</u>	-  +	High Degree: intensified through contrast: brilliant – under-achieving	Monogloss: presupposition
+1.1.2	<i>A blend of 60% Merlot and 40% Cabernet Franc grape composition since resulting in dense, opaque wine?</i>	(Involvement) Possible token of <u>Appreciation</u>	?		
+1.1.3	<i>7080 cases</i> low yields since resulting in concentrated wine?	(Involvement) Possible token of <u>Appreciation</u>	?		
+1.1.4	<i>14.5% natural alcohol</i> degree of alcohol since resulting in intense wine?	(Involvement) Possible token of <u>Appreciation</u> Composition-Intensity	?		
+1.1.5	<i>14.5% natural alcohol</i> production process	<b>Appreciation</b> Valuation Naturalness	?		
+1.2	<i>spectacular...</i> wine's emotional effect <b>Magnificent(ly)</b> wine's emotional effect	<b>Appreciation</b> Reaction: Quality <b>Appreciation</b> Reaction: Quality	+  +	Infused intens. high degree High degree	Monogloss: presupposition Monogloss: presupposition
+1.2.1	(implied) experience of wine's colour		(+)		
+1.2.1.1	<i>inky/blue/purple-hued 2005...</i> wine's colour	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Intensity:	+	Descr. indicating very dark colour	

		colour		Intens. through repeti- tion	
+1.2.2	<b>Extraordinary... nose</b> experience of wine's smell	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition Unspecified	+	Infused intens. High degree	
+1.2.2.1	<i>...projected</i> wine's smell	Invoked <b>Appreciation</b> Composition Intensity	+	?	
+1.2.2.2	<i>blueberries, black- berries, liqueur of minerals, flowers, and...toasty new oak</i> wine's smell	Invoked <b>Appreciation</b> Composition Complexity	+	Force quanti- fication (list) high degree	
+1.2.2.3	<b>Subtle</b> wine's olfactory component of oak	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition Balance			
+1.2.3	(implied) experience of wine's palate		(+)		
+1.2.3.1	<b>magnificently con- centrated</b> experience of wine's attack	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition Intensity	+	Force isolated intens. high degree	
+1.2.3.2	<i>a seamless integra- tion of acidity, wood, tannin, and alcohol</i> experience of wine's attack	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition Balance	+	Focus Sharpen? Force maxi- mization	
+1.2.3.3	<i>a soaring mid- palate</i> experience of wine's mid-palate	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition Intensity	+	Force isolated intens. High	
+1.2.3.4	<i>and a finish that lasts over 60 sec- onds</i> wine's aftertaste	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition Persistence	+	Force quanti- fication extent in time	
+1.3a	<i>...it is a wine of compelling poten- tial. Anticipated ma- turity 2010-</i> wine's potential to develop	<b>Appreciation</b> Valuation: Potential to develop	+	Force in- tens./quant? upgrade	Heterogloss: Expand: En- tertain?
+1.3b	<i>Anticipated matur- ity: -2030±</i> wine's durability	<b>Appreciation</b> Valuation: Durability	(+)	Focus: soften? ( <i>anticipated</i> ) Force intens. upgrade (+)	Heterogloss: Expand: En- tertain?

### 7.2.3 CHÂTEAU BOLAIRE 2003

Compared to Bon Pasteur and Angélu, which were discussed above, the review of Château Bolaire 2003 involves downtoning. As explicated in figure 6:10, the subordinate normative standpoint of the Bolaire review (1b-1) is instantiated by the numerical score 85. The superordinate standpoint (1b) is however left unarticulated, drawing on the audience's cooperation to infer the superordinate normative standpoint. As already mentioned above, the numerical score could be regarded as a possible instance of the semantically underspecified subcategory of Reaction/Valuation. The numerical scores are however not included in the overview of Parker's attitudinal profile represented in figure 7:2.

The following formulations have been used to express the production-related argumentation of the Bolaire review, which was abstracted in the preceding chapter (see figure 6:11).

*Although 2003 is Bolaire's debut vintage, it appears this will be a serious estate for consumers to keep an eye on. Moreover, it will be an original one given the incredibly high percentage of Petit Verdot (39%) planted in the vineyard. The remaining vines include Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. Bolaire's wines are imported exclusively by Lou Kapcsandy*

This production-related thematic unit is introduced by an expression signalling dialogistic contraction: Counter, i.e. *although*. The communicative function of formulations from this Engagement category is to “project on to the addressee particular beliefs or expectations” or “particular axiological paradigms” (Martin & White 2005:121). Here, the text construes an audience that holds the belief that the first vintage produced at a new estate is usually not particularly good. Resources from the Counter category are dialogistically contractive rather than expansive in that they present the writer as aligning with the reader in the axiological paradigm that is taken for granted, i.e. that new estates usually do not produce wine of high quality. Tindale (2004:84) uses the term *prolepsis* from traditional rhetoric to designate this phenomenon. He describes the dialogistic potential of this rhetorical figure in the following way:

...this is the countering of imagined objections, and so success depends to a large extent on the quality and appropriateness of such imaginings. [...] Prolepsis [is] suited for an audience not predisposed to the position being advanced. [...] Successful prolepsis depends on the acceptability of the objections. The ones introduced need to be the ones that the audience, even if they had not thought of them themselves, could imagine making or could see it appropriate to make. [...] Successful use of [prolepsis] also has an ethotic pay-off, since using prolepsis gives the argumentation an air of objectivity, shows the arguer trying to conceive things from the other point of view and treating that point of view in a reasonable fashion.

Intuitively, it does not seem unreasonable that the first year of wine production could be problematic. It is worth noting that the type of objection raised again emphasizes the man-made aspect of wine-making over the soil that was already there and will stay the same in the future even if new and better wine-making techniques are introduced. However, the natural negative expectation arising from the commonly held belief, i.e. that the estate cannot be expected to achieve good quality in their debut vintage, is however presented as not fulfilled, which leads to a pleasant surprise. According to Martin & White (2005:121), reader-writer solidarity is thereby enhanced since writer and audience are presented as unified in their initial scepticism as well as their subsequent feeling of unexpected gratification. It is also noteworthy that the evaluation of the estate as being serious is presented by means of dialogistic expansion: Entertain: ...*it appears this will be a serious estate...* The authorial voice thus introduces the proposition as one subjective position among a variety of alternative positions. Furthermore, the factual information about the grape varieties of the remaining vines can be interpreted as support for the evaluation of the estate as being serious in striving to combine tradition with innovation, since the incredibly high percentage of Petit Verdot is combined with the most common Bordeaux grapes Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. It is worth noting that the Judgement of the producer as *serious* transferred from the conscious human beings in charge to the *estate*, which is presented as having the human characteristic of being *serious*. The avoidance of the producer's name and other enthusiastic epithets grammatically associated with a proficient human agent contributes to the construction of Bolaire as less stable than Bon Pasteur and Angélu, whose responsible producers were characterized differently (see sections 7.2.1 and 7.2.2).

The expression *moreover* has been interpreted as an indicator of multiple argumentation (van Eemeren et al. 2002:64–65), i.e. that two alternative arguments of equal strength are presented as independent defences (see section 6.2.3). The evaluation of the estate as being *original* is not given as subordinate support of the preceding evaluation of the estate as being *serious*. Instead, *original* is taken to possibly instantiate another value: Uniqueness. The fact that two independent arguments are introduced and overtly marked as parallel defences in this particular text can be taken to indicate that the authorial voice presents the standpoint as so contentious that it may require additional justification. From the perspective of the Appraisal system, this occurrence can be taken to represent a realization of the Engagement category of Proclaim/Justify (see section 3.2.3). The value of Uniqueness that is instantiated by the item *original* has been understood to be further reinforced by the information that the wines can be acquired *exclusively* through Lou Kapcsandy.

Compared to the two preceding reviews, the general impression is that the production-related unit of the Bolaire review is captured in formulations that make it considerably more open for alternative positions. In addition, the lack of amplification construes the writer as less ardently committed to the value positions put forward, hence not strongly aligning readers into his value posi-

tions but instead providing space for divergence without excluding sceptical readers from the intended audience. By presenting himself as also adhering to this reluctant position before being convinced to adopt the contrary view, the author demonstrates solidarity with these resistant readers.

Let us now proceed to the thematic unit devoted to description-evaluation of the perceptual experience of Château Bolaire 2003, whose potential argumentative outline was illuminated in figure 6:12. The following formulations are used to instantiate the Bolaire review's descriptive-evaluative argumentation:

*Although light, herbaceous, and revealing jagged, stemmy tannins, the 2003 exhibits surprisingly complex aromatics.*

As did the surface structure of Bolaire's production-related unit, the formulation used to capture the descriptive-evaluative unit is also initiated by a locution expressing dialogistically contractive countering, which is used to frame the negative attitudinal expression (*light*) and more factual descriptions of this wine's problematic qualities (*herbaceous...jagged, stemmy tannins*). This construes the audience as initially legitimately sceptical with respect to this wine's quality, a scepticism that is presented as shared between writer and audience. The natural expectation evoked by the initial negative evaluations is of course that the olfactory impression of the wine would be simple and unsatisfactory. Contrary to expectation, the wine nonetheless proves to exhibit *complex aromatics*. However, I note that the particular elements that make up the wine's olfactory complexity have not been listed. This makes the portrayal of Bolaire's complexity different from that of Bon Pasteur (*sweet black raspberries, cherries and smoky herb aromas*) and Angélu (*extraordinary projected nose of blueberries, blackberries, liqueur of minerals, flowers, and subtle, toasty new oak*). In other words, the factual support for the evaluation that is present in the two previous reviews is missing in this text. According to Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1365a) "the same things when divided into their parts seem greater; for there seems to be an excess of more things present". The division into olfactory components not only conveys a sense of 'greatness', it also gives the impression that it is an exact rendering rather than attitudinally coloured depiction of reality that is being communicated. The description of Bolaire's complexity is nevertheless limited to the argumentatively superordinate, explicitly attitudinal expression *complex*, which does not, to the same extent as the aroma descriptions in the two previous reviews, invite the audience to be persuaded on their own terms about the degree of complexity of this wine's aromatics. The investigation of the whole data set, which is visualized in figure 7:2 above, shows that the value of complexity is more frequently instantiated by means of invoked Appreciation than by explicitly evaluative lexis. A majority of the instances of Complexity that have been listed as inscribed do in fact co-occur with invoked realizations where the aroma components are enumerated indi-

vidually, which the following example taken from the review of the 2003 Branaire-Ducru illustrates:

(7:16) the profound 2003 Branaire Ducru boasts [...] an *extraordinarily complex* nose of *black currants, blackberries, espresso roast, white chocolate, minerals, and truffles*.

Consequently, we can draw the conclusion that the instantiation of Complexity represented in the Bolaire review is rather unusual. The examination of the Bolaire review can therefore be said to highlight, through the contrastive example that it provides, a feature that is characteristic of Parker's writing.

Furthermore, in relation to the *complex aromatics*, the writer expresses an emotional Reaction of positive surprise (*surprisingly* Reaction: Impact) which it is assumed that the intended audience will interpret as righteous and align with. While communicating an emotional Reaction (Attitude), the item *surprisingly* also functions as an occurrence of Countering (Engagement) of the initial series of negative evaluation. In addition, it serves the purpose of upgrading (Graduation) the attitudinal expression *complex*. In this instance, the item *surprisingly* is thus taken to have three communicative functions that are relevant from the point of view of the three different subcomponents of the Appraisal system.

A conspicuous feature of the surface form of Bolaire's descriptive-evaluative unit is that it does not adhere to the generic, iconic organization schema of the wine tasting note in the sense that the taste/mouthfeel of the wine is portrayed before the smell. The olfactory stage is instead introduced after the stages that normally follow it according to the wine tasting ritual. This arrangement allows the negative perceptual aspects to be backgrounded, while it is the only positive feature of the perceptual experience of this wine, i.e. the wine's complex aromatics, that is foregrounded by means of this presentational technique. The Bolaire review can therefore be said to have over-all positive argumentative drift despite the fact that the items *light, herbaceous* and *jagged stemmy tannins* have been understood to instantiate negative Composition values, i.e. lack of Intensity and perhaps also lack of Maturity, a possible Composition value suggested by the items *herbaceous* and *stemmy*.<sup>135</sup>

It is interesting to note that the same rhetorical strategy is drawn on in both the production-related and the descriptive-evaluative unit: The text's projected readers are construed as having an initial negative or sceptical view which the writer presents himself as sharing with them. Reader-writer solidarity is further established since the writer presents himself as just as surprised as it is assumed that the audience will be by having their original pessimistic expectations countered. In other words, the discourse community of wine is construed as initially

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<sup>135</sup> In the coding of the whole data set, *herbaceous* and *stemmy* were classified as occurrences of negative Maturity, since these items were taken to indicate that the wine was made from unripe grapes.

diversified with respect to some of the characteristics represented by this estate's wine. The rhetorical technique contributes to reducing expectations, so that audience members possibly still prepared to give this wine a chance will direct their attention to the positive potential of the wine's aromatics rather than the wine's gustatory deficits. While the reconstruction of the prescriptive standpoint that was proposed in figure 6:10 suggests that readers are being dissuaded from obtaining this wine, but encouraged to perhaps acquire future vintages from Château Bolaire, the indirect exhortation *Anticipated maturity 2007-2013* can perhaps be understood as a recommendation to obtain and consume the 2003 to get an idea of what future vintages may be like, just as the writer has done. The reference to the wine's future durability has however not been taken to signal evaluation of this wine in terms of its durability.

**Table 7:3 Overview of the Appraisal analysis of Bolaire 2003**

Arg. not.	Text/ target of evaluation	Attitude	Pos/ neg	Graduation	Dialogistic positioning
1b	(implied)				
1b-1	<u>85</u> wine's overall quality	Appreciation Reaction? Valuation? Involvement?	?	Force: low degree	Monogloss: Assertion
+1.1a	(implied)				
+1.1a.1	<i>...it appears this will be a <b>serious</b> estate producer</i>	<b>Judgement</b>	+		Heterogloss: Expand: Entertain
+1.1a.1.1	<i>...it will be an original one... The remaining vines include Merlot and Cabernet Sauvignon. producer's choices</i>	<u>Judgement</u>	(+) (+)		
+1.1b.1	<i>Moreover, it will be an <b>original</b> one... estate <u>...given the incredibly high percentage of Petit Verdot</u> estate's wines</i>	<u>Appreciation</u> valuation: Uniqueness  <u>Appreciation</u> Valuation: Uniqueness	+	Force: intens. high degree + quant	Heterogloss: Contract: Proclaim: Justify
+1.1b.2	<i>Bolaire's wines are imported <b>exclusively</b> by Lou Kapcsandy accessibility of Bolaire's wines</i>	<u>Appreciation</u> Valuation: Uniqueness	+		
-1.1	(implied)				
-1.1.1	<i>Although this is <u>Bolaire's debut vintage</u> producer's experience</i>	<u>Judgement</u>	-		Heterogloss: Contract: Counter



+1.2	<i>Surprising(ly)</i> taster's response	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction Emotion	+		Heterogloss: contract: counter
+1.2.1	(implied)				
+1.2.1.1	<i>Surprisingly complex aromatics</i> wine's olfactory complexity	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Complexity	+	Force intens. upgrade	
-1.2a	(implied)				
-1.2a.1	<i>Although light</i> wine's taste	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Intensity	-		Heterogloss: contract: counter
-1.2a.2	<i>Herbaceous</i> wine's taste (and smell?)	<u>Appreciation:</u> composition: maturity?	-		
-1.2a.3	<i>Revealing jagged stemmy tannins</i> wine's mouthfeel	<u>Appreciation:</u> Composition: Balance? Maturity?	-		

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## 7.2.4 CHÂTEAU CANTEMERLE 2003

This section presents the interpretive Appraisal analysis of the review of Château Cantemerle 2003. In the preceding argumentation analysis (see section 6.2.4), the prescriptive standpoint was found to be ambiguous (see figure 6:13), which will be discussed below. The subordinate normative standpoint (1b-1) is realized by means of the same numerical score as the Bolaire review, namely 85. The review of Cantemerle is another example from the relatively small group of data set reviews that concern wines which have not induced a high degree of appreciation. Just as in the Bolaire review, the superordinate standpoint (1b) is left unexpressed. The following linguistic outfit functions to dress up the production-oriented argumentative skeleton of the Cantemerle review, which was displayed in figure 6:15:

*This is a competent...effort*

The fact that the production-related unit consists of only one assertion can be taken to signal that the writer has not considered this estate worthy of argumentation, neither for, nor against. Following Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1378b), this rhetorical strategy can be interpreted as a form of 'belittling': "we think both good and bad things are worth serious attention, also things that contributed to them, but whatever amounts to little or nothing we suppose worthless". The judgemental adjective *competent* instantiates a low degree on the scale of capacity compared to the expressions used to praise the producers at Bon Pasteur (*brilliant, world-renowned*), Angélu (*brilliant*) and Bolaire (*serious*). Yet, it

cannot be said to be overtly negative, which is why I have interpreted this instance as a form of belittling. Furthermore, it is worth noticing another presentational difference, which indicates a cline of stability in the presentation of the producer from Bon Pasteur to Cantemerle: In addition to being presented with his name, Michel Rolland (Bon Pasteur) is described as *brilliant* as well as *world-renowned*, and Hubert de Boüard is also praised as *brilliant* (if not world-renowned). In comparison, the depiction of Bolaire as a *serious estate* can be seen to indicate a restriction in the degree of stability of the presentation, since the metonymy obscures the specific person responsible. *Estate* nevertheless indicates more stability than *effort*, an expression that merely highlights this particular wine making achievement.

The countering (*but*) that constitutes the transition to the descriptive-evaluative unit, where the wine is subsequently evaluated as *uninspiring*, projects a reader who adheres to the commonsensical idea that a competent endeavour normally results in a product of good quality. This natural and just expectation is however not fulfilled in this case. Again, the rhetorical strategy of countering is aligning, since it presents the writer as sharing with the audience the initial optimistic expectation and the disappointment when this expectation is not fulfilled.

Furthermore, it is worth observing that the introductory evaluation is presented by means of a construction from the Engagement category of monoglossic assertion. This presentational strategy is of rhetorical significance, since it has the communicative function of presenting the evaluations as foregrounded, encouraging readers to regard them as the central part of the message. This contrasts with the framing of the explicit evaluations in the Bon Pasteur and Angélu reviews, where it was observed that the occurrences of Judgement were presented by means of constructions indicating presupposition, which instead has the function of backgrounding the evaluations and presenting them as taken for granted.

In the preceding chapter (see section 6.2.4), the reconstruction of the descriptive-evaluative unit of the Cantemerle review resulted in a plausible argumentation structure, which was displayed in figure 6:15. The following formulations are used to express this sophisticated, equivocal argumentation:

*This is a[n]... uninspiring effort. Aromas of figs, plums, and black cherries emerge from this straightforward, soft, medium-bodied, simple, one-dimensional offering.*

The expression of negative emotional Reaction of dissatisfaction that initiates the descriptive-evaluative text section is presented as being in opposition with the expectations arising from the judgement of the producer's achievement as being *competent*. The presentation employs a zeugmatic construction, which consists in connecting the two opposing adjectives (*competent* and *uninspiring*) by linking them to the same noun (*effort*). As pointed out above, this presenta-

tional strategy has the advantage of both being economical and creating connections between thoughts. This case is particularly interesting from the point of view of persuasiveness, since the connection that is being made seems to do more than just function as a transitional device. While *competent* highlights the human activity facet inherent in the semantics of the noun *effort*, *uninspiring* targets the product that results from this human activity, more specifically the emotional effect that this product has had on the writer. This zeugmatic device functions here without seeming ungrammatical because the feelings expressed, both positive and negative, are so weak, bordering on indifference or ennui.

The use of *effort* to designate the resulting product emphasizes the fact that wine is a result of human activities, i.e. a consumer product that can be improved if more adequate production methods are used. According to Johnson, it is precisely this focus on the manmade aspect, which, when taken up by the actual audience of wine producers, has led to the development termed Parkerization:

If by altering your wine-making – perhaps picking the grapes later for maximum alcohol, handling them differently in the winery, soaking the skins for longer to get more colour and density, aiming, in short, for density, sweetness and strength (viscosity, even) – you can score 90 points instead of 85, the temptation is hard to resist (Johnson 2005:44).

Despite the negative emotional framing of the descriptive-evaluative argumentation, there is nothing to indicate serious lack of quality in the subordinate factual rendering concerning the wine's smell. The expression *aromas of figs, plums and black cherries* in fact suggests a certain, even if not overwhelming, complexity. In addition, based on Caballero's (2007) investigation, *emerge* can be used by wine writers to express the quality +Force, –Speed, thereby indicating a certain if not tremendous intensity. The olfactory portrayal of the wine amounts to the idea that its Complexity as well as Intensity is satisfactory. The factual account that is provided in this part of the argumentation therefore does not seem to support the superordinate negative emotional proclamation.

The negativity of the emotional argumentation is nevertheless taken up again in the references to taste and mouthfeel that follow the depiction of the wine's smell. While the initial contrastive evaluations are presented in a textually foregrounded position, which directs the audience to interpret the attitudes that are being conveyed (*competent...uninspiring*) as worthy of attention, the return to the negative position following the factual presentation of olfactory qualities is captured in a formulation that entails presupposition. The communicative function of this rhetorical strategy is to construe the audience as self-evidently aligned into the negative position that was established initially. Still, careful examination of the items that occur in the string *straightforward, soft, medium-bodied, simple, one-dimensional offering* gives a somewhat contradictory impression. I have taken *straightforward* to instantiate the Attitude sub-

category of Reaction: Association that has been added to the original Appraisal model to deal with the specific meanings expressed in this material (see section 7.1). In this instance, I take *straightforward* to mean approximately the same thing as 'unexciting'. The quality is however portrayed as a characteristic of the wine independent of any experiencer, which makes it different from for instance *uninspiring*. It should be pointed out that there is nothing inherently negative about *straightforward*. In a different context, it may well be used positively to indicate frankness and honesty. While the audience is left with the ostensible freedom to provide this expression with the meaning content that they find appropriate with respect to their own associations, the apparent negativity of some of the other items in the string nevertheless directs the reader towards a negative interpretation. Furthermore, two other items that occur in this negatively framed string also acquire dismissive or negative colouring here because of the co-text. Based on Parker's wine glossary, *soft* seems otherwise in fact to be a predominately positive descriptor of taste/mouthfeel. *Medium-bodied* is supposedly a neutral, classifying expression denoting a specific wine type rather than an evaluative expression. Nonetheless, due to negative co-textual colouring, this occurrence of *medium-bodied* can be taken to invoke negative attitude, suggesting lack of weight/viscosity. Finally, *simple, one-dimensional* which sum up this string are clearly negative, establishing the wine as lacking in over-all complexity (and possibly also Balance if *one-dimensional* can be taken to refer to Complexity as well as Balance). The descriptive-evaluative section thus closes with the co-occurrence of two negative expressions with approximately the same meaning, which reinforces the negative attitude.

The projected audience that this text construes is one that aligns with the author in his negative or at least indifferent attitudinal position. The fact that the factually oriented presentation still suggests aromatic complexity and intensity as well as tactile softness is confusing, and can be taken to signal that the discourse community is diversified with respect to the qualities represented by this wine. However, those that choose to hold on to the position that this wine must be good considering the factual description are not being addressed by the text, but rather construed as a group that the writer and his projected audience distance themselves from on the basis that they resist being aligned into the negative emotions that frame the description. Interestingly, the following much more positive evaluation of this wine was found on the website WineCentric. It is perhaps particularly conspicuous that this reviewer appraises the wine for having European-styled elegance (*Old World panache*), a characteristic which Parker does not mention in his text:

A 5th Growth Bordeaux from Haut Medoc with 12.5% alcohol.

TASTING NOTES:

Garnet color with aromas and flavors of barnyard and bittersweet chocolate up-front followed by toast, black currant, grape jelly, blueberry and blackberry. Strong plum notes pop on the finish.

SCORE & RECOMMENDATION:

91 PTS

This is an excellent Bordeaux for around \$20 - \$25. Tons of complexity, ever evolving in the glass, big smells, vibrant fruit and Old World panache as well. Thumbs up!<sup>136</sup>

Without suggesting that either of these contrasting reviews is more accurate or reliable than the other, it is nevertheless intriguing to note a number of characteristics that are brought to the fore as properties worthy of depiction in the WineCentric review. *Garnet*, for instance, suggests a fairly light-coloured wine, much lighter than the colour descriptions that normally occur in the positively oriented Parker reviews, e.g. *an opaque purple color* or *midnight black color*. It is also worth observing that the Cantemerle 2003's level of alcohol is relatively modest (12.5%), compared to the wines that are deemed to be of high quality among the 200 data set reviews, where the lowest alcohol level mentioned is 13%.

The consumption-oriented unit of the Cantemerle review, which has the argumentative function of instantiating the ambiguous normative standpoint (see figure 6:13) is expressed as a pure imperative, *Drink it over the next decade*. According to Martin & White (2005:111), "the imperative is monoglossic in that it neither references, nor allows for the possibility of, alternative actions". This way of presenting the prescriptive standpoint differs from all the other alternatives that have been considered so far, i.e. the formulations used in the preceding reviews (Bon Pasteur, Angéus and Bolaire) were all found to contain locutions from the dialogistically expansive category of Entertain. In view of the negative emotions that the audience was aligned into throughout the descriptive-evaluative argumentation, the use of an assertive pure imperative is somewhat surprising here. This is because the exhortation that is being issued in fact clashes with the conclusion that the ideal audience is invited to draw based on the argumentation. The natural conclusion would of course be to take the decision not to drink the wine. A possible interpretation of the use of the assertive imperative in this instance is that the exhortation is not intended for the audience that the text projects as its preferred readers. Instead, the group that this imperative can be seen to target is those that find the qualities of this wine, i.e. the wine's reasonably complex aromatics and the relative pleasantness of the wine's palate, satisfactory despite the author's negative emotional response.

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<sup>136</sup> This contrasting review is available at [http://winecentric.blogspot.com/2008\\_01\\_01\\_archive.html](http://winecentric.blogspot.com/2008_01_01_archive.html).  
Date of access 31th July 2011.

The readers who side with Parker are naturally not expected to want to obtain and drink this wine due to the negative emotions that they share with the author, so they cannot be the addressees intended by this imperative. As observed above (see sections 5.3.4 and 6.2.4), the imperative construction can also be seen to have the interpersonal effect of being less inclusive than declaratives and noun phrase constructions, since the pure imperative functions to exclude the author from the group that is targeted by the recommendation.

Although Château Cantemerle 2003 has been provided with a numerical score that is identical to the one given to Château BOLAIRE, i.e. 85, these two reviews have been observed to display rather different rhetorical patterns: The BOLAIRE review has been noted to have a positive evaluative orientation in contrast to Cantemerle, where a negative argumentative drift has been revealed by this close textual analysis. The differences in argumentative and evaluative patterns displayed by these texts contribute to enhancing the understanding of how the author employs Appraisal resources so as to construe himself and the purported audience as members of a group with the same, very high demands regarding a wine's quality. In this text, persuasiveness in appraisal is facilitated by the incorporation of explicitly attitudinal lexis into the factual descriptions, which functions to guide the purported readers' interpretation. Table 7:4 summarizes the Appraisal analysis presented in this section:

**Table 7:4 Overview of the Appraisal analysis of Cantemerle 2003**

Arg. not.	Text/ target of evaluation	Attitude	Pos/ neg	Graduation	Dialogistic positioning
1b	(implied)				
1b-1	85 wine's overall quality	<u>Appreciation</u> : Reaction? Valuation? Involvement?	?	Force: low degree	Monogloss: assertion
+1.1 +1.1.1	<i>This is a competent... effort</i> producer's achievement	<b>Judgement</b>	+?	Force infused intens., low degree	Monoglossic assertion, possibly ironic?
-1.2a	<i>...but uninspiring effort</i> wine in relation to taster's emotional response	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction: Impact	—		Heterogloss: Contract: Counter Monogloss: Presupposition
-1.2a-1	<i>Straight-forward offering</i> wine in relation to associations	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction: Association	—		
-1.2.1	<i>Simple, one-dimensional offering</i> wine's taste	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition Intensity + Balance?	—	Force Intens. through repetition	Monogloss: Presupposition

-1.2.1.1	<i>Medium-bodied</i> wine's body	<u>Appreciation:</u> Intensity	?	
+1.2	(implied)			
+1.2.1	(implied)			
+1.2.1.1	<u><i>Aromas of figs, plums and black cherries</i></u> wine's smell	Invoked <u>Appreciation</u> Complexity	?	Force quanti- fication (list), medium de- gree
+1.2.1.2	<i>Aromas...emerge</i> wine's smell	Invoked <u>Appreciation</u> Intensity	?	Enhancement moderate de- gree (force but not speed)
+1.2.2	<b><i>soft</i></b> wine's mouthfeel	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition Unspecified	+	

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## 7.2.5 BERNARD BURGAUD CÔTE RÔTIE 2004

While all the preceding reviews have had positive or ambiguous orientation, this is the only text selected for close interpretive analysis that presents a univocally negative assessment of the wine, and hence also a recommendation to the intended audience not to obtain this wine. The reconstruction of the Burgaud review's normative and prescriptive standpoints is presented in figure 6:16. The number (74-76) represents the lowest numerical score of the five selected reviews. In contrast to the numerical scores in the Bolaire and Cante-merle reviews, which were understood to instantiate a low degree of Appreciation, perhaps bordering on indifference, the very lowness of the Burgaud score suggests a heightened, albeit negative, value in the present context. The number (74-76) can be expected to raise the purported addressee's attention, reinforcing the idea that this wine really is unworthy of being obtained and consumed. The Burgaud review represents an instance of strong dissuasion, and the close investigation of this review therefore provides an opportunity to study persuasiveness in decidedly negative assessment. As suggested in figure 6:16, the superordinate, negatively oriented, normative standpoint (1b) has been understood to be implied by the expression *Burgaud's 2004 Côte Rôtie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields*, which is listed as invoked Reaction/Valuation in the annotation of Attitude.

The plausible argumentative skeleton of the Burgaud review's production-related review is visualized in figure 6:17. The following linguistic outfit is chosen to dress up this argumentation:

*(A disappointing offering from) this generally reliable producer. Burgaud's 2004 Côte Rôtie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields.*

The attitudinal expression that initiates the production-oriented section relates to the experience of tasting the wine and will therefore be further discussed in relation to the descriptive-evaluative unit. It is nevertheless worth noting here that while the taster's response (*disappointing*) is presented as foregrounded, new and thus noteworthy information, the ostensibly positive Judgement of the producer as being *generally reliable* is couched in a formulation that makes it come across as a presupposed, previously established value that the audience shares with the writer. The opposition that is created between the negative Appreciation (*disappointing*) and the positive Judgement (*reliable*) is based on the commonsensical expectation that a reliable producer's wine should be of high quality. When this natural and just expectation regarding this wine's quality is not fulfilled, this leads to a righteous emotional response of disappointment, a disappointment that it is assumed the audience will share with the writer.

The author's dissatisfaction with the wine is subsequently supported by factual evidence which is presented as if it were common knowledge and not new information for the audience, i.e. *the vintage's enormous yields*. There is nothing explicitly evaluative in the formulation itself, although the hyperbolic quantifying expression (*enormous*) can be taken to invoke an evaluative reading of the facts that are presented. Based on their knowledge about wine-making, readers are expected to contribute the negative evaluation of the production strategy that the producer has chosen. This production-oriented unit can be said to construe an audience that shares Parker's opinions about how products of high quality should be achieved, viz. through a production strategy which results in the opposite of enormous yields.

It is also worth observing that in contrast to the preceding Cantemerle review, the production-oriented unit of the Burgaud review involves a more animated although negative evaluation. Based on Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1378b), the rhetorical significance of this strategy can be seen to lead the audience to regard the Burgaud case as more worthy of attention than Cantemerle.

Let us now consider the descriptive-evaluative argumentation of the Burgaud review, which is displayed in figure 6:18. The following formulations have been used to instantiate this argumentation:

*A disappointing offering...diluted, charmless, herbal, and thin,...*

In the Burgaud review, the thematic unit devoted to description-evaluation is fused with the production-related unit in the surface form of the text. The initial emotional Reaction to the experience of drinking this wine is followed by factual information about aspects of the production process that have affected the resulting wine negatively, specifically the allegedly excessive yields. Subsequently, the descriptive-evaluative argumentation is resumed, and a connection is thereby established between the producer's unsuccessful choice of production strategy and the compositional inadequacies revealed by the tasting experience. The negatively charged emotional Reaction (*disappointing*) is supported



by items from the Appreciation category of Composition, *diluted* and *thin*, which respectively initiates and closes a string of inscribed attitudinal expressions. These expressions have been taken to suggest lack of Intensity as well as Complexity. The fact that two items with approximately the same meaning have been used entails reinforcement of this deficit. Furthermore, another item from the Reaction category is embraced by these Composition items, *charmless*. This expression draws on the audience's associations. In contrast to the instance of association in the Cantemerle review above (*straightforward*), the item *charmless* leaves little room for anything but negative associations. It can therefore be seen to strongly align readers into the negative attitudinal value position that is being advanced. It is interesting to note that the Reaction/Impact items, *uninspiring* and *disappointing* respectively, which occur in the two last reviews (Cantemerle and Burgaud) concern the taster's response rather than the quality of the wine. This contrasts with the positively oriented reviews (Bon Pasteur and Angélu) which involve several expressions that address the quality of the wine (*tasty*, *spectacular*, *magnificent*). In reviews with negative orientation, corresponding negative expressions which highlight the quality of the wine (*bad*, *awful*) are nevertheless avoided. In addition, as observed above, instances of negative Reaction/Valuation are not employed, e.g. 'The Burgaud has not turned out well'. Instead, negative Attitude is expressed using resources from the subcategories of Composition and Association, which has already been indicated in the schematic overview of Parker's attitudinal profile provided in figure 7:2.

Finally, *herbal* is not in itself clearly evaluative. The co-text nevertheless directs readers to look for a negative reading of the item. Based on Parker's glossary of wine terminology, I have taken this instance of *herbal* to be synonymous with 'vegetal', which indicates a flawed characteristic caused by the use of unripe grapes in the production of the wine.<sup>137</sup> The item is therefore taken to invoke the suggested Composition value of -Maturity. In this case, the insufficient degree of ripeness is irreparable, since the choice of production strategy prevents the wine from having any potential to develop with additional bottle age.

The production-related as well as the descriptive-evaluative unit have the rhetorical effect of strongly aligning readers into the writer's negative emotional attitude, which appears as the only reasonable emotional value position to adopt towards this wine due to the compositional deficits (*diluted*, *thin*) and factual evidence (*vintage's enormous yields*, *herbal*) presented in support of the negatively oriented proclamations indicating emotional attitude.

Finally, it is worth observing that the formulation that closes this review, *it is a wine to be avoided*, which has been understood to express the prescriptive

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<sup>137</sup> Parker's glossary of wine terms (*The Wine Advocate*. A glossary of wine terms) lists the following definition of 'vegetal': "An undesirable characteristic, wines that smell and taste vegetal are usually made from unripe grapes".

standpoint 1a, does not involve predictions regarding this wine's ideal drink time. The future drink event is thereby presented as irrelevant in the present context. By the end of the argumentation of the Burgaud review, the resistant readers inscribed at the beginning of the text as initially holding on to the position that Burgaud's producer is *reliable* are expected to be completely convinced about the inadequacy of this wine's quality. The grammatical construction *it is a wine to be avoided* places the addressor and the putative addressee in the same group as consumers who are unified in their resolution not to obtain this wine.

This close investigation of the review of Burgaud 2004 completes the interpretive Appraisal analysis undertaken in the present study. The table below provides an overview of the Appraisal analysis of the Burgaud review:

**Table 7:5 Overview of the Appraisal analysis of Burgaud 2004**

Arg. not.	Text/ target of evaluation	Attitude	Pos/neg	Graduation	Dialogistic positioning
1b -1.1.1	<i>Burgaud's 2004 Cote Rotie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields</i>	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction/ valuation	—	Force quant ( <i>enormous</i> ) reinforcing negative attitude	Monoglossic presupposition ( <i>vintage's enormous yields</i> )
1b-1	<i>74-76</i> wine's overall quality	<u>Appreciation</u> Reaction? Valuation? Involvement?	(-)	Force: high degree	Monogloss: Assertion
-1.1	<i>Burgaud's 2004 Cote Rotie displays the effects of the vintage's enormous yields</i> producer's choice of production strategy	<u>Judgement</u>	—		
+1.1	<i>...this generally reliable producer</i> producer's capacity	<b>Judgement</b>	+		Heterogloss: contract counter
-1.2a	<i>A disappointing offering</i> wine in relation to taster's emotional response	<b>Appreciation</b> Reaction: Impact	—		Monogloss: assertion (eclipsed)
-1.2a-1	<b>Charmless</b> wine in relation to associations	<b>Appreciation</b> Reaction: Association	—		Monogloss: presupposition
-1.2.1 -1.2.1.2 -1.2.1.3	<i>diluted, thin</i> wine's taste	<b>Appreciation</b> Composition: Complexity and Intensity	—	Force intens. through repetition	Monoglossic presupposition
-1.2.1.1	<i>herbal</i> wine's smell/taste	<u>Appreciation</u> Composition: Maturity	—		

### 7.3 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The investigation presented in this chapter has been assisted by the analytical tools offered by Appraisal theory. The analytical perspectives of representations and argumentation were taken to provide crucial support for the development of a network of subcategories that are appropriate with respect to the current material. Drawing on the classification of Attitude proposed by Martin & White's (2005) model for initial inspiration, several subcategories were added to the subsystem of Appreciation. The division into thematic units, which was presented in chapter 5, was thereby taken to provide a decisive distinction regarding the addressor's perspective on the target of evaluation. Since the descriptive-evaluative units concern the writer's immediate perceptual and emotional experience, the relevant attitudinal categories were taken to be Composition and Reaction. These major classes of Appreciation were subdivided into a number of subcategories, which are related to the type of emotional attitude referenced by the text as well as the type of perceptual value that is addressed.

The production-related as well as consumption-oriented units imply a fundamentally different speaker perspective, which is understood to involve cognitive considerations based on external evidence as well as extensive previous practice. The Attitude subcategories relevant for these thematic units are Valuation and Judgement. Some of the Valuation subcategories proposed in figure 7:1 can be seen as attitudinal values that are only relevant for the specialized discourse domain under study, e.g. Location and Typicality, while a number of the attitudinal values suggested by the Valuation subcategories in figure 7:1 address *topoi* that are more generalized, for instance Durability, Affordability and Uniqueness. The annotation of Attitude in the whole data set was based on informed intuition about the discourse semantic meanings addressed by the current data rather than on intersubjectively observable lexico-grammatical criteria. The subcategory of Judgement, for instance, incorporates occurrences where the capacity of conscious human beings is referenced although the lexico-grammatical construction suggests evaluation of an entity. The preceding argumentation analysis was relied on to provide support for categorizations in the annotation of discourse semantic attitudinal values addressed in the present data.

The schematic overview of Parker's attitudinal profile, which is presented in figure 7:2, is designed to give a coarse-grained rather than exact report on the analysis of the data set. Although the visual representation should be regarded as a rough approximation, it can nonetheless be taken to give rather clear indications about the relative importance that is assigned to different attitudinal values in Parker's writing. For instance, Intensity is the most frequently addressed compositional value and Judgement is more frequently instantiated than any of the subcategories of Valuation that are proposed by the scheme in figure 7:1. The arrangement of attitudinal values represented in figure 7:2 can be seen as indicative of the world view encouraged by Parker's writing.

Following the schematic overview provided in section 7.1, section 7.2 offered a presentation of interpretive scrutiny of the five selected reviews, drawing on all of the three subcomponents proposed by the Appraisal model, i.e. Attitude, Engagement as well as Graduation (see section 3.2.3). According to Aristotle (*On rhetoric* 1404a) “it is not enough to have a supply of things to say but it is also necessary to say it in the right way” and “the lexis will be appropriate if it expresses emotion and character and is proportional to the subject matter” (*On rhetoric* 1408b). Section 7:2 provided a fine-grained investigation of the way in which things are said in Parker’s reviews, the intention being to give a systematic account of the linguistic choices made by the writer and to explore the rhetorical potential of the resources that are employed. In other words, the focus of the close interpretive appraisal analysis is not *what* is said but *how* it is said. The analytical discussion throughout section 7.2 was conducted in a deliberately tentative manner, striving to bring to the fore both aspects of the current material that are made observable thanks to the analytical model as well as methodological difficulties pertaining to the application of discrete analytical categories.

In the following, I will sketch a few generalizations regarding persuasiveness in appraisal that can be ventured on the basis of the elucidation in section 7.2: A noteworthy feature of the texts’ surface form was shown to be an intricate amalgamation of Attitude resources, where items referencing the Appreciation subcategory of Reaction function to frame values of Composition. The subcategory of Composition was frequently found to be instantiated by expressions that are not explicitly evaluative, but which are coloured with evaluative meaning by collocating inscribed Reaction values, Composition values and/or by means of Graduation resources. Furthermore, reviews with a strongly positive standpoint displayed a tendency for invoked values of Composition to occur alongside explicitly evaluative expressions of Composition, while it appeared more characteristic for reviews with indifferent or negative standpoint that values of Composition are inscribed by means of explicitly evaluative lexis but with fewer invocations through factual renderings to support the inscribed negative Composition values. Negatively oriented reviews were moreover observed to feature values from the Reaction subcategory of Impact or Association, which highlight the negative emotional/associative response to the perceptual experience rather than the target’s lack of quality. Items referencing the Reaction subcategories of Quality were observed to occur in commendatory reviews alongside items indicating Association. Furthermore, the values of Appreciation were observed to be textually interwoven in such a way that items instantiating Reaction values are textually backgrounded and presented as monoglossic presuppositions. In contrast, factual renderings, which rely on the audience’s willingness and capacity to infer evaluative charge, are typically presented as monoglossic assertions, i.e. in foregrounded textual positions.

Where heteroglossic resources are introduced into the colloquy, they primarily serve the rhetorical function of closing down the dialogistic space with

respect to the other voices that are brought in. In other words, while the text is found recurrently to attend to other, dialogically alternative, positions, there is a tendency for such alternative viewpoints to be challenged or averted by means of resources of Countering.

The discursive persona emerging from the text amounts to an authoritative, dedicated and meticulous writer, who invites the audience to share his emotional reactions alongside the sensory perceptions that justify these reactions. The text thereby construes a purported audience with the same scruples, principles and high demands as the writer, an image that is reinforced by the use of Involvement resources, e.g. proper names, technical lexis and specialized terminology (Martin & White 2005:35), which function to position addressor and audience as fellow initiates in a culture of discriminate and sophisticated consumption. The audience is thus conjured as a knowledgeable and critical group that requires the presentation of tangible evidence in order to be convinced, and in that sense it can be argued that the purported readers are allowed to be convinced through a process of self persuasion on the basis of a perspective they have helped co-construct and see as plausible.

Rather than persuading strongly oppositional readers to adopt new points of view, the text can be understood to provide those that already embrace the same world view as Parker with support for an opinion towards which they were themselves already leaning. It can perhaps be argued that the expert audience conjured by the text does not correspond with Parker's real world readership of wealthy consumers in an ever globalizing community of oenophilia. As suggested by Caballero & Suárez Toste (2010:266), tasting notes written by expert wine critics play an important role in wine acculturation among non-expert wine lovers. The objections and alternative viewpoints that were observed to be introduced into Parker's colloquy may therefore not correspond with the actual audience's beliefs and objections, because these oppositional ideas might not have occurred to the real world readers. The presence of opposing viewpoints, which are ascribed to the purported audience, nonetheless gives Parker's argumentation an air of objectivity.

The linguistic realization of the prescriptive standpoint is different from the rest of the text in that expansive dialogistic resources of Entertain are drawn on. Following Paradis (2009b), this has been understood as an expression of the weakly deontic discourse function of the speech act of recommendation, which is supposedly beneficial to the addressee rather than the speaker. The heteroglossic expressions that are used in the majority of the reviews to instantiate the prescriptive standpoint can be seen to open up the dialogistic space and so provide the purported addressee with the option not to take up the recommendation while still being included in the group addressed. In other words, the formulations that are used are suggestive of an 'offer' rather than a 'demand' (see section 5.3.4)

The analytical discussion conducted throughout the present chapter has also aimed to demonstrate how the Appraisal analysis is connected with and sup-

ported by the investigations undertaken in the preceding chapters. The knowledge gained from the preceding elaborations of presentations and argumentation was continually incorporated into the Appraisal analysis so as to substantiate as well as critically question categorizations. The combination of the three analytical perspectives is intended as a contribution to the development of methodologies for performing textual analysis that is firmly grounded in the situational context within which the discourse occurs.

## 8 CONCLUSION

Arising from a fascination with Parker's unparalleled success as a wine critic, the empirical aim of this study has been to explore rhetorical mechanisms that contribute to the persuasiveness of his wine writing. The empirical aim was captured in the general research questions that were formulated in section 1.2:

- How does the text mould Parker's discursive persona in terms of identity and relations?
- How does the text position the audience in terms of identity and relations?
- Which world view is evoked by the text, and how is this world view conjured and sustained?

The core contribution of this enquiry has been to provide answers to these overarching questions.

Throughout the analysis chapters, the ambition has been to consistently go beyond a naive reading of the text, which has been the only facet of the present topic directly accessible for examination. Fairclough's (1992, 1995) model of a communicative event was found to be helpful as a frame for the investigations, since it allows the text, discursive practice and socio-cultural practice to be seen in terms of different dimensions. The analysis of the text is staged against the general socio-economical situation, i.e. the culture of consumerism and prevailing economic model of growth as well as the particular institutional domain of wine. In addition, the exploration of the data takes into consideration the discursive conventions that have come to be associated with winespeak and which therefore influence and constrain both the discursive strategies of persuasion available to the writer and the discursive strategies of interpretation accessible to the prospective reader.

While striving to provide a guided tour through potentially persuasive elements of Parker's rhetoric, the current study also seeks to demonstrate the methodological value of combining and coordinating different techniques for text analysis in order to arrive at increasing depth of understanding of the object under study. The exploratory analytical discussion conducted throughout

the analysis chapters shows that access to general world knowledge, more specific understanding of the socio-cultural context as well as familiarity with register conventions both contributes to substantiating, and poses problems for, analytical categorization. A theoretical outcome of the study is the challenge that it presents with respect to the theoretical concepts and ideas that are addressed.

## **8.1 OVERVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS**

Rather than providing measurable results in terms of valid and reliable statistical evidence, the empirical objective of this hermeneutic enquiry has been to arrive at enhanced understanding of the topic. The analytical exploration has consistently strived to make visible elements that are not immediately observable on the basis of the surface form of the textual message. The research questions have functioned to gear the investigations to potentially persuasive elements of Parker's rhetoric rather than to a specific set of linguistic items. The three analytical perspectives of representations, argumentation and appraisal offered in the chapters of the present study can each be seen to contribute an essential part as equally important pieces of the current empirical research puzzle. It is the combination of the three analytical perspectives that allows enhanced understanding of the persuasiveness of Parker's wine writing. This section proposes to present an overview and discussion of the most important empirical insights.

Parker's discursive persona is shown by the analysis to be moulded as serious, impartial and unprejudiced. The exploration of the research questions from the analytical perspective of representations took note of the importance of the representational frame for the general positioning of Parker's rhetorical endeavour as critical and independent consumer advocacy designed to protect consumers against inadequate products. The writer's discursive persona is conjured as a disinterested judge of wine quality in terms of objective consumer standards. This clearly emphasized manifesto was observed to be reinforced by means of the visual resources that meet the reader on *The Wine Advocate* homepage (section 5.1).

Parker can be understood to possess extensive practical wisdom. Dissection of the perceptual experience into component parts, which was found to be a characteristic trait of Parker's reviews, 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 events 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 tasting notes themselves, the surrounding background story provides the



source of evidence with ample credibility despite the fact that smell and taste perception 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 (chapter 5).

Furthermore, Parker is rational. The reconstruction of Parker's argumentation, which was presented in chapter 6, has shown that his assessments are continuously substantiated by means of several levels of subordinate argumentation. While all the levels of the argumentation structure are not overtly realized in each individual review, the presentation of interpretive argumentation analysis of the selected reviews demonstrated that an implicit argumentation structure can nonetheless be discerned. Superordinate attitudinal assessments were found to be consistently supported by means of factual evidence providing what can conceivably be understood as reasonable substantiation for pronouncements. The investigation recurrently revealed that connections were established between the wine's qualities as perceived during the tasting event and generally accessible information about the wines' production. The fact that Parker's argumentation was found to also involve opposing viewpoints provides his writing with an air of objectivity: the decisive verdict about the wines' quality is based on critical reflection. Parker's argumentation was moreover found to draw on argument schemes indicating rational argumentation: Symptomatic argumentation, which establishes connections between the standpoint and certain distinguishing marks, was found to be continuously drawn on. Moreover, the argument scheme of analogy was shown to be both explicitly and implicitly resorted to in order to provide substantiation. The frequent comparison with other supposedly comparable wines suggests a writer with extensive experience. The argument scheme of analogy was also found to be implicated in the predictions of the wine's future development, where Parker's extensive experience with similar wines is drawn on implicitly to substantiate consumption recommendations. Contextual information about Parker's longstanding experience provides such arguments from analogy with credibility. Given the media image of Parker as having outstanding perceptual capacity, extensive practice and exceptional memory for perceptual experiences, argumentation from ethos, which was shown to be heavily relied on, can also be understood as a form of rational argumentation in the present context.

Parker's discursive persona is moreover confident and authoritative. The precision with which the assessments are articulated, i.e. exact numerical scores, suggests a writer convinced about his own capacity to provide such exact verdicts about the wines' quality. The analysis also revealed that Parker's texts make extensive use of graduation resources moulding a discursive persona that characteristically is strongly committed to the value positions that are

put forward. Graduation resources simultaneously function to provide Parker's writing with passionate enthusiasm about the gratification of pleasurable perceptual experiences.

Parker's relation to his readers is one that is presented as building on the audience's trust in him as an authority. Readers are encouraged to rely on Parker because of his honesty, experience, consistency and reliability. The analysis of the visual resources exploited on *The Wine Advocate* website were shown in the analysis to have the function of establishing a direct relationship between author and addressee as well as enforcing the author's ardent commitment to the consumer's interests.

However, while Parker's reviews are found to mould a discursive persona that is an authority in the particular domain that the texts target, he is simultaneously portrayed as a person who happens to have an outstanding talent for wine appreciation but who is otherwise a completely ordinary man positioned in a relationship of equality with his audience (section 5:1). The construction of the writer and putative addressee as members belonging to the same group is reinforced by the selection of associative lexis, which invites associations that are conceivably relevant for the writer as well as the audience. Furthermore, extensive employment of Involvement resources indicates that the writer addresses his audience as fellow members of an initiate group that is comfortable with the use of such specialized lexis from the fields of wine production, vinification and wine tasting (chapter 7). Parker's writing was also shown to exploit a range of other linguistic resources to construe joint group membership, which suggests an addressor keen to bond with the intended audience: For instance, factual renderings were continuously found to be textually foregrounded and so presented as up for debate and potentially in need of justification, while strongly attitudinal values were observed to be textually backgrounded. The audience is thereby positioned as being in complete ideological agreement over essential values, but seeking new information about facts (section 7.2).

The depiction 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 (chapter 5).

In order for a recommendation to be taken up favourably by the audience for which it is intended, it is vital that readers understand the advice to truly

benefit them rather than the speaker himself. As pointed out above, the policy presented in *The Wine Advocate* writer standards (*The Wine Advocate*. Wine Advocate writer standards) functions to emphasize the independence and disinterestedness of Parker's recommendations. These declarations simultaneously contribute to construing the audience as a sceptical group, reluctant to trust wine producers, because they may try to overprice inadequate products, as well as other wine writers, because they may have financial interest in, or other inappropriate alliances with, the wine industry.

The detailed renditions of the wine tasting experiences provided by the tasting notes position the audience as also paying attention to such fine-grained observations of a wine's qualities. The presentation of exact, generally accessible evidence about the wines' production projects an ideal reader requiring such verifiable substantiation in order to be convinced about the reliability of the assessment. The argumentation in Parker's reviews was consistently shown to invite reflection and self-persuasion on the part of the intended audience through presentations that encourage the purported addressees to be convinced on their own accords regarding the quality of the wines that are being reviewed. Parker's argumentative technique thus conjures an ideal audience that is also rational, requiring tangible evidence in order to be convinced about a wine's qualitative merit before taking action and obtaining it (chapter 6). In addition, the ideal audience was repeatedly shown in the analysis to function as co-constructors of the message providing counter-argumentation that is subsequently defied by the writer's voice (chapter 6 and 7).

The writer's and audience's joint group membership was found to be underpinned by extensive use of associative lexis (see figure 7.2), which ostensibly allows the readers to make their own associations and so contribute their own emotional response. The audience is thereby positioned as collaborators in the construction of the texts' attitudinal values. The interpretive analysis however showed that associative lexis recurrently co-occur with explicitly attitudinal expressions, which function to guide the imagined reader to provide the associative lexis with the attitudinal values that are embraced by the writer. In other words, the textual arrangements suggest that the attitudinal orientation of associations is taken for granted, hence subtly aligning the audience into the preferred interpretations of associative expressions (section 7.2).

Where heteroglossic resources are introduced into the colloquy, they were observed to primarily serve the rhetorical function of closing down the dialogic space with respect to the other voices that are brought in. Put differently, while the text was found to attend to other, dialogically alternative, positions, the analysis revealed a tendency for such alternative viewpoints to be challenged or averted (section 7.2). This characteristic indicates that Parker's writing projects an ideal audience that is not strongly opposed to the view that is being advanced by the writer. Instead, Parker's opinion is construed as one towards which the putative readers were themselves already leaning. Reader-writer solidarity is enhanced since the writer presents himself as sharing with

the audience the initial, reasonable reservations that are subsequently countered (section 7.2). The contraction of the dialogistic space for such alternative viewpoints emphasizes the communality of writer and audience as members of the same discourse community, defending the same values, ideas and ultimate ideology regarding fine wine. The text thereby construes a purported audience with the same scruples, principles and demands as the writer.

On the one hand, it can be argued that the purported addressees are allowed to be convinced through a process of self persuasion on the basis of a perspective they have helped co-construct and see as plausible. On the other hand, the text's taken-for-granted-ness in the form of implied assumptions and values are of crucial importance with respect to the conjuration of a common ground. Following Fairclough (2003:55), I understand the opportunity to shape this common ground to simultaneously provide the opportunity to exercise ideological domination and social power within the domain of knowledge in which a communicative event takes place. Parker's attitudinal profile, which was represented in section 7.1, positions both writer and audience as oriented towards and interested in particular features of a wine as most relevant for that wine's quality. The compositional value of Intensity was found to be particularly salient in Parker's writing (see figure 7:2), an outcome of the present investigation that agrees with previous commentary on Parker's wine writing (see e.g. McCoy 2005, Johnson 2005).

The representational manifesto of ardent consumer activism, which was found to permeate *The Wine Advocate's* webpage, has implications for the world view of wine as a consumer product, which can be improved by means of constantly upgraded rectification of the production, rather than as an expression of a culture with longstanding inherited traditions worthy of preservation because of their enduring prestige. The analysis of representations took note of the fact that wine makers are portrayed as strongly instigating agents, having decisive influence on the wine's resulting quality (chapter 5). The selection of information given in the production-related units reflects a particular world view, i.e. one which promotes the role of the producer's personal responsibility for the resulting quality of the wine due to professional dedication and successful choices in the technical production of the wine. The emphasis on the producer's competence was confirmed by the schematic overview of Parker's attitudinal profile, which showed that Judgement is the most frequently instantiated attitudinal value in the production-related units of the texts (figure 7:2). While the argumentation analysis proposed that individual reviews construe a symptomatic relation so that the wine's quality is presented as a symptom of the producer's capacity, recurrent employment of this symptomatic argument scheme contribute to invoking a more general connection of cause and effect (section 6.2). This feature of Parker's writing invites a world view according to which the manmade aspects of the wine are assigned more importance as the cause of a wine's quality than the particular characteristics that result from the combination of soil, climate and longstanding traditions. Parker's writing can

be said to discourage a world view according to which the “sense of somewhere-ness”, i.e. the wines’ cultural and historical heritage, is assigned major significance. The protection of the contemporary consumer’s immediate rights is thereby presented as more important than the preservation of a legendary culture whose very *raison d’être* is firmly grounded in the longstanding mystique and prestige that has come to be associated with its inherited categorizations and obscure qualitative hierarchies.

Furthermore, the presentational technique used by the writer to portray the tasting event procures a certain world view of the described entity, promoting the presence of the component parts of the immediately perceived sensations at the expense of the surround of experience, for instance the traditional cultural significance of table wine as a beverage to complement food. The analytical view of wine, which was observed in the analysis to be a typical characteristic of Parker’s writing, is encouraged in the educational field of oenology, since it is understood to provide an objective tool to describe the aromas of wine. The lists of aroma components found in Parker’s writing were however understood to also express implicit attitudinal values, promoting the world view that greater complexity in a wine’s aromatics entails higher quality. 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 (chapter 5).

The numerical scores, which accompany the tasting notes, are moreover suggestive of a world view according to which it is possible to assess all types of wine in relation to the same numerical system. To underscore the numerical assessments, the production-oriented and descriptive-evaluative thematic units were revealed by the argumentation analysis to have the potentiality to express intricate hierarchies of arguments on different levels of a suppositional argumentation structure. The argumentation analysis enabled the discovery of recurrent argumentative patterns in Parker’s rhetoric, i.e. that different surface forms can be demonstrated to express degrees of similar argumentative meanings. My investigation revealed that the choice of words functions as part of a generalizable system of argumentative hierarchies. The argumentation in the reviews was shown to repeatedly reproduce a particular world view which promotes the importance of certain aspects of a wine’s merit at the expense of others. More specifically, the texts were found to have a strong tendency to promote ripe and complex wines displaying intensity of colour, smell as well as taste, a style of wine which it has become increasingly possible to make thanks

to new wine making technology. This world view of wine quality was found in the analysis to permeate attitudinally coloured presentations as well as factual renditions. In this respect, the findings of the current study confirm previous commentary about Parker's writing (see e.g. McCoy 2005, Johnson 2005).

From a more general perspective, the issuing of predictions, in this case providing wine lovers worldwide with consumption advice regarding fine wine, implicitly procures a more general world view according to which it is accepted that certain individuals should be entrusted with the power to pronounce on the future. The very issuing of predictions is a sign of a powerful discursive persona identifying itself as being in the socially ratified position to pronounce on the addressee's potential future actions. The presentation on *The Wine Advocate* webpage indicates that Parker's audience involves illustrious members, for instance former Presidents Clinton and Chirac, who rely on Parker as a dependable guide to making informed consumption choices (chapter 5). The fact that so many and such notorious consumers in the international community of wine are willing to place themselves in the position to be advised by a consumption guru is suggestive of the general world view of our contemporary society, which assigns substantial importance to the products that we consume.

Due to the popularity of Parker's wine writing among financially strong consumers in the ever globalizing community of wine, the world view encouraged by his discourse has become the dominant world view to the extent that it has acquired the status to influence the way in which the product is shaped. Is Parker's discursive endeavour to be regarded as conquest rhetoric, which imposes a world view on the addressed party, or invitational rhetoric, which is characterized by openness and "protects the integrity of the other person by creating space for growth and change through self-persuasion" (Tindale 2009:48)? The distinction between these two categories appears to reside in the arguer's underlying motive for the rhetorical enterprise, i.e. whether it arises out of self-interest or genuine consideration for the purported audience. Available contextual information contributes to conjure the idea that Parker's rhetorical endeavour is not driven by self-interest but indeed by true concern for the intended audience of consumers of fine wine. It can perhaps be argued that the initiate audience conjured by the text does not correspond with Parker's real world readership of wealthy but novice consumers in an ever larger community of oenophilia. The objections and alternative viewpoints introduced into the colloquy may therefore not correspond with the real world audience's beliefs and objections, because these oppositional ideas might not have occurred to the real world readers. The present study is however not intended to raise moral objections against Parker's rhetoric as permeated by conquest strategies suggesting power abuse, but designed to provide an unbiased account of the mechanisms that contribute to making the current occurrence of discourse persuasive.

In exploring the empirical research questions, the primary aim of my investigation has been to gain enhanced insight with respect to this particular case of

persuasive rhetoric, thereby contributing to knowledge as to how persuasiveness can be achieved in the context of fine wine consumption. By revealing the rhetorical core of this instance of persuasive discourse, it is also my hope that this study will contribute to our general knowledge about the mechanisms that render communicative endeavours convincing. The empirical investigations have consistently strived to show that the persuasiveness of discourse is not a direct function of the text itself, i.e. the particular words and grammatical constructions that are chosen to capture the message. Persuasiveness rather arises as a result of concordance among an intricate array of interrelated factors. In the present study, persuasiveness is seen as intrinsically bound up with the superordinate dimensions of the communicative event of which the texts are part, i.e. the socio-cultural as well as discursive practice. An important research strategy has therefore been to continuously include different kinds of available contextual information in the analysis of the text. In other words, the current study has devoted considerable attention to taking into account “what is said” in relation to “who is saying it and why” (Tindale 2004:6).

To sum up the most pertinent empirical findings of the present study, the investigation has provided the following answers to the research questions: Parker’s discursive persona comes across as serious, impartial and unprejudiced. His writing moulds a character that has extensive practical wisdom and dedication to giving exact witness statements. Proclamations are abundantly substantiated by factual evidence, which indicates a rational arguer. In addition, confident attitudinal pronouncements are suggestive of a convinced and authoritative writer, strongly committed to the announced value position. Parker’s relation to his readers builds on the audience’s trust in him as an authority in the particular field that his reviews target, where they are in need of his expertise. The audience is conjured as a sceptical group, justly reluctant to rely on the wine industry or other wine critics, and therefore requiring tangible evidence in order to be convinced. Furthermore, associative and specialized lexis enhance reader-writer solidarity, confirming joint membership in a group of essentially ordinary people with initiate and discriminate consumption habits. While the audience is ostensibly allowed to be convinced through self-persuasion about the reviewed wines’ quality, the text’s taken-for-granted-ness constructs the announced viewpoint as one towards which the readers were themselves already leaning. The audience is thereby subtly led towards the same viewpoint as the writer, i.e. that wine is a consumption product whose value depends on the contemporary consumer’s immediate sensory gratification. Parker’s writing furthermore promotes a decomposed world view, encouraging the audience to focus on the component parts of the product, ultimately emanating in the message that more is better. The cultural dimension of the prestigious beverage is thereby eclipsed. Finally, the essence of Parker’s writing also amounts to the following more general idea: That which many desire is better than that which is only desired by a few. This message, which permeates

Parker's writing, contributes to a popularized rather than elitist conception of wine.

While not providing exact answers to the empirical research questions in terms of statistically reliable results, the outcome of this study is plausible rather than definitive. It nonetheless provides a reflective perspective on Parker's writing as well as perhaps persuasive writing in any particular field, where the author can be shown to have found the available means of persuasion.

## **8.2 EVALUATION OF METHODOLOGY**

The general research methodology of the present enquiry has been defined as hermeneutic, the ultimate goal not being to verify or falsify hypotheses but to acquire increasingly profound understanding of the topic under study. A problem inherent in hermeneutic research is that analysts cannot in actual fact prove that they are right, since the traditional scientific notions of validity, reliability and representativeness are not applicable to interpretive analysis of a limited selection of data. Consequently, the presentation of the findings has continuously strived to make it clear that the results explicate that which is plausible rather than that which is provable. In the evaluation of the methodology of the present investigation, I will reflect on the following criteria, which were introduced in section 3.2: First, completeness, which refers to whether or not it would have been possible to shed more light on the research questions by the addition of new data and the analysis of new linguistic devices, and second, accessibility, which in the present study has been understood to incorporate transparency and thereby the possibility of following the elaborations and critically assessing the findings.

The three methods of analysis are combined in such a manner that they build on one another in order to arrive at increasing depth of understanding of the topic under study. Throughout the investigations of representations, argumentation and appraisal, I drew attention to a number of methodological problems associated with making implicit elements of the discourse observable. The distinction between explicitness and implicitness in linguistic realization was thereby seen as a continuum. Considerable importance was assigned to general world knowledge and more specific contextual understanding for the possibility to unveil elements of the discourse that are not immediately observable on the basis of the surface form of the message.

The material selected for this investigation comprises a compilation of 200 texts. This data set was exposed to the exploratory analysis of representations as well as rudimentary enquiry from the analytical perspectives of argumentation and appraisal. Five texts were extracted from the corpus for the presentation of close interpretive analyses demonstrating how the analytical tools offered by pragma-dialectics as well as Appraisal theory are used to arrive at enhanced understanding with respect to the empirical research questions. Consid-



ering the distribution of numerical ratings in the data set reviews (figure 4:1), it might seem counterproductive with respect to representativeness of the whole material, which is dominated by positive reviewing, that three of the five reviews selected for close scrutiny concern wines that have been given a numerical score of 85 or lower. The texts reviewing these lower-ranked wines, which represent a minority of the data set texts in terms of numerical score and thereby also general attitudinal orientation, are nonetheless found to play an important role in confirming tendencies that were noted in the exploration of reviews involving ratings towards the higher end of the numerical scale. The methodological benefit of including these texts correlates with Potter's (2007:317) observation that deviant cases may "display in their detailed organization precisely the reason why a standard pattern should take the form that it does". The five texts were selected on the basis that they take note of diversity in Parker's writing in addition to that which is typical.

The investigation of persuasiveness in representations provided an exploratory approach to Parker's wine writing, involving a miscellany of different observations, the goal being to arrive at an outline of aspects that are characteristic of representations in the material as a whole so as to provide an introduction to the subsequent analyses of argumentation and appraisal. The enquiry into representations resulted in a relatively detailed outline of the entire corpus, incorporating an overview of the texts' content and division into thematic units. The analysis took note of a number of different features that define the thematic units. It was noted that the thematic units are distinguishable on the basis of spatial and temporal requisites as well as the reliance of evidence and mode of knowing. The observations made in the explorations of thematic units were subsequently taken to be of crucial importance for the interpretation of the texts' employment of argumentation and appraisal resources. The presentation in chapter 5 thus functions as a fundamental methodological backdrop for the rudimentary investigations of argumentation and appraisal, which are presented in sections 6.1 and 7.1.

By means of the incorporation of a relatively extensive data set in the exploratory investigation of representations and the rudimentary analyses of argumentation and appraisal, it is expected that the criterion of completeness has the potential to be fulfilled as regards the amount of data included in the study, i.e. the addition of new data is not expected to shed new light on the persuasiveness in Parker's writing. The analysis of representations also purported to contribute to the fulfilment of the criterion of accessibility by providing a crucial backdrop which was intended to facilitate understanding of subsequent enquiries, where analytical tools were employed which allowed progressively closer scrutiny of the texts.

Proceeding from the division into thematic units, the exploration of persuasiveness in argumentation first provided a schematic overview of Parker's argumentation, positioning its standpoint as ambivalent between prescriptive and normative. This basic schematic pattern is adaptable to the whole corpus of 200

texts. Using the methodological tools for reconstructing argumentative discourse provided by the pragma-dialectical model of argumentation, the presentation of the five selected texts offered a close interpretive perspective of the texts' argumentative dimension. The reconstruction of the argumentation in Parker's reviews revealed aspects of the texts that may not be apparent at first glance but which can nonetheless be shown to fulfil subtle argumentative functions when related to the context of situation in which they occur. It could perhaps be argued that the far-reaching reconstructions of Parker's reviews that the current study undertakes are not immediately accessible for other analysts working within the pragma-dialectical paradigm. The presentation of the interpretive reasoning underlying the transformations as well as the elucidation of argument schemes and topoi is nonetheless intended to make the analysis procedure transparent and possible to follow, thereby striving to fulfil the methodological criterion of accessibility. It is important to emphasize that the argumentative skeletons that the reviews were found to involve do not represent the writer's real world thought processes, but are to be seen as a result of the application of analytical tools to a conglomerate of ideas that the reviews can be shown to externalize. The notions of argument scheme and topoi were found to be useful for the present enquiry, since they allow the values that the text takes for granted as well as implicit argumentative reasoning principles to be uncovered. Drawing on these concepts as analytical tools, it was possible to reveal argumentative elements of the texts that would otherwise remain unnoticed, thereby going beyond a naive reading of the text.

The rudimentary analysis of appraisal comprised annotation of Attitude in the whole data set using a scheme of categories developed specifically for this enquiry. The original set of Attitude categories proposed by Martin & White (2005) thereby provided initial inspiration, and it was demonstrated how the model can be used as a flexible tool for performing contextually situated analysis of authentic discourse occurring within a highly specialized field with its particular arrangement of field specific values. The additional subcategories of Appreciation that were proposed were substantiated on the basis of the criteria for wine evaluation proposed by Charters (2007) as well as the idea of generalized and specialized topoi, which were thereby reinterpreted as subcategories of the previously proposed Appreciation category of Valuation. It is my hope that the Attitude scheme developed for the present study can subsequently be employed as a basis for further investigations into the language of wine appreciation and perhaps also appraisal of aesthetic phenomena in general.

It was occasionally difficult to determine the exact attitudinal meanings referenced by the expressions in the text, which made dependable annotation of Attitude somewhat problematic, partly because the linguistic items that prevail in the register of winespeak have the potentiality to simultaneously express several attitudinal meanings. A visual representation of Parker's attitudinal profile has therefore been preferred, delimiting the display to relative frequencies of instances of positive and negative, inscribed as well as invoked, attitudinal

meanings. This enables the exposition of trends in the material rather than giving exact numbers, percentage figures and statistically certified proof (figure 7:2). The visual display of the whole material excludes instances where attitudinal values were referenced, but the polarity of the attitude was unclear. This is because the UAM corpus tool is not designed to incorporate such occurrences. Don & Hommerberg (forthcoming) purport to test the usefulness of the system of Attitude subcategories proposed in the current study as well as the reliability of the observed tendencies by means of inter-rater annotation of a portion of the material.

The division into thematic units as well as the hierarchical argumentative organization that resulted from the preceding analyses of representations and argumentation was employed as a backbone in order to systematize the application of the analytical resources provided by the Appraisal system. The presentation of close interpretive Appraisal analysis of the five selected texts served two purposes: First, the exposition clarifies the reasoning behind the supplementary Attitude categories that were added to the subsystem of Appreciation, thus conducting an open analytical discussion, allowing readers to follow and thereby assess the appropriateness of classifications of linguistic expressions. The interpretive explication continuously drew attention to the methodological problems associated with the application of discrete categories that are supposedly not based on observable lexico-grammatical structures but ultimately on discourse semantic notions, which have a predisposition to be realized as certain lexico-grammatical structures. Second, the detailed scrutiny of the five selected texts showed how the attitudinal categories are instantiated in individual texts as well as how attitudinal values interact with resources from the Appraisal subsystems of Graduation and Engagement so as to induce persuasiveness in appraisal. While Parker's texts were found to make extensive use of resources of Graduation to express different degrees of attitudinal values, I refrained from giving a schematic account of Graduation in the whole material. The ideas proposed by Appraisal research into Graduation have inspired the interpretive analysis presented in this study, but since the basic notions of Force and Focus were found difficult to distinguish, coding of the data using the Appraisal subsystem of Graduation was found problematic (see section 7.2). The resources of Engagement were also found to be more usable when conducting interpretive analysis of individual texts rather than for large-scale annotation. The tentative annotation of Engagement as well as Graduation in the entire data set nevertheless served the methodological function of supporting the interpretive analysis.

The analyst's previous familiarity with the domain under study inevitably affects to some degree the possibility of arriving at initiate interpretation of discourse occurring in a highly specialized field. From one point of view, it can be seen as advantageous with respect to the current topic that the analyst has a non-professional outsider's perspective, first because the target audience of Parker's discursive endeavour is explicitly defined as made up of consumers,

not the wine trade, and second, because the analyst does not have any preconceptions of or alliances with any of the actors on the wine arena. However, my want of previous expertise in the domain under study has simultaneously to some extent impaired categorizations and interpretations of this inherently obscure material.

In order to employ the methods selected to carry out the interpretive analyses as accurately as possible it has been necessary to resort to specialized analytical terminology, which may delimit the accessibility for readers of the current study who take an interest in wine but are not previously familiar with discourse analytic approaches to linguistics and argumentation studies. To nonetheless strive to make the interpretations as generally accessible as possible, it has been my ambition to consistently provide illuminating examples of the concepts that are brought up throughout the analytical discussions so as to facilitate understanding, thus striving to fulfil the criterion of accessibility.

### **8.3 POTENTIAL THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The theoretical paradigms underlying the methodological approaches to the material in the current study are understood to be compatible on the basis of the idea that they encourage the study of authentic text rather than constructed sentences and that they do not take meaning to reside in particular linguistic expressions, but to be construed in the communication between author and addressee on the basis of co-text as well as context. The primary theoretical contributions of this enquiry are first, the challenge that the investigation of the current data poses with respect to the theoretical concepts and ideas that are addressed, and second, the theoretical bridges that the study attempts to build, both as regards the integration of world knowledge with linguistic notions and between the different theoretical paradigms that are addressed.

While the linguistic study of evidentiality as well as temporality is sometimes theoretically delimited to overt realizations in the form of specific grammatical and/or lexical markers, the theoretical understanding of these notions is not delimited in such a way in the present study. Instead, it is demonstrated how general knowledge about how the world functions and more specific contextual awareness about the communicative event under study can contribute to the understanding of the notions of temporality and evidentiality. Given the condensed and elliptic nature of the textual material that is the target of analysis, the inclusive interpretation of these notions offers enhanced insight into the general organization of the texts in terms of distinguishable thematic units. This has implications for the theoretical grasp and application of the analytical tools of argumentation and Appraisal theory.

While not encompassing the normative agenda that ultimately underlies the pragma-dialectical model of argumentation, the present study offers an analytical perspective that is firmly grounded in the context of situation in which the

argumentation is staged. The focus of this enquiry is to elucidate what is said in relation to who is saying it and why instead of pronouncing on whether the argumentative moves are justifiable with respect to normative criteria. It is thereby continuously demonstrated that the reconstruction of the standpoints, the arguments and their organization as well as the *topoi* and argument schemes on which they are based cannot be fully understood without recourse to knowledge that is external to the particular instance of argumentative text with which the analyst is confronted. While providing enhanced understanding of the phenomenon under study, i.e. the persuasiveness in Parker's writing, the argumentative perspective on the wine reviews also purports to show that argumentation analysis can fruitfully be extended to incorporate discourse that is not apparently argumentative based on the surface form of the message, but which can nonetheless be shown to perform an important argumentative function in encouraging the audience to embrace a particular world view at the expense of other possible world views.

It is however first and foremost the SFL-anchored Appraisal model that the current study has devoted most extensive theoretical attention to. The Appraisal model is thereby celebrated for its generosity as an accessible tool for researchers in text analysis that do not have extensive expertise regarding the extravagant and impenetrable theory of language that SFL advocates. While it should be clearly acknowledge that the present study does not attempt to justify or question proposed analytical tools from a theory-internal SFL perspective, the close interpretive analysis of the current material could nevertheless be seen as an empirical challenge to the theoretical components of the Appraisal model, which when confronted with real world data are found to not always be watertight. It is in this sense that the current study can be seen as a contribution to the on-going research project of Appraisal theory, which according to White (2001) has many problems still to be solved.

As pointed out above, an important theoretical assumption permeating the current study is that meaning does not reside in particular linguistic expressions but is construed in the communication between author and addressee on the basis of co-text as well as context. This position is compatible with the ultimate foundation for the Appraisal model's analytical categories, which is professed to be potential rhetorical effect rather than lexico-grammatical structures. The current study has consistently tried to take seriously the idea that the model's proposed schemes reference discourse semantic categories rather than lexico-grammar, and the analytical discussion has evolved around the possibility of finding justification for the proposed categories on discourse semantic grounds. In order to offer an application of the model that is as coherent and illuminating as possible with respect to the current material, recourse is made to the two preceding analytical perspectives: The division into thematic units provided in the analysis of representations is thereby understood to be of fundamental import for the speaker's perspective on the appraised entity and in that sense to function to guide the application of Attitude categories to the data. Furthermore, the

argumentation analysis of the reviews enables a hierarchical account of the texts' potential core discourse semantic meaning, thereby laying the foundation for an Appraisal analysis that goes beyond the surface form of the message. Correspondingly, the Appraisal analysis also contributes to enhancing the argumentation analysis through the enlightened view that it offers with respect to the linguistic resources employed by the writer in a more or less strategic manner to render his argumentation persuasive. In other words, while profiting from the empirical insights gained from the application of analytical tools from pragma-dialectics and Appraisal theory, it is also my ambition to try to build a bridge between these two paradigms.

## **8.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS AND AGENDAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

According to Fairclough (2003:204), discourse analysis should be seen as an important complement to social research, since “without detailed analysis one cannot really show that language is doing the work one may theoretically ascribe to it”. The primary empirical contribution of the present study has been to provide such a detailed account of the dimensions of text and discourse practice of the current communicative event. Although drawing on Fairclough's (1992, 1995) model of a communicative event, I have been reluctant to position this study within the school of CDA, primarily because the research focus has been delimited to close textual interpretation, while the socio-cultural dimension has provided a backdrop for the analyses. The current study is intended to enhance understanding of the persuasive potential of the investigated texts in relation to the socio-cultural context in which they occur, but the results of the enquiry do not make any claims to being able to contribute actively to social-cultural change. Furthermore, the present study can perhaps not be seen to target the kind of serious social and political phenomena that are generally regarded as suitable topics of investigation for CDA-oriented studies (Martin & Wodak 2003). In addition, the objective has not been to univocally criticize the power that Parker's rhetorical endeavour entails, but to make visible the connection between rhetorical power and the conditions for people, societies and cultures in the manner proposed by Blommaert (2005:1). On the one hand, Parker's writing can be seen as an occurrence of challenging, subverting, renovating and liberating discourse. It represents an attack on rigid power structures, both because it legitimizes a taste which is disapproved of by elitist critics thereby making the pleasures of fine wine more accessible to new groups of consumers, and because it has revolutionized the French world of fine wine production so as to enable newcomers without aristocratic roots to enter this prestigious arena. On the other hand, Parker's rhetorical achievement can be understood to have entailed new power structures, and perhaps ultimately a threat to the culture of mystique and inherited traditions which originally justified its existence. The detailed linguistic examination of the texts that the current study offers

should therefore be seen as a contribution to the more extensive goal of showing how language can function to transform societies and cultures. In this respect, the enquiry is intended to contribute to general awareness of the power of language, shedding critical, but not ideologically coloured, light on the object of investigation.

It should also be acknowledged that this study offers elucidation of the linguistic angle of a topic that could fruitfully be researched within the realms of a cross-scientific project where the linguistic analysis functions to complement the perspectives of other scientific disciplines, for instance sociology, psychophysics and economy in this case. Seen from a more general perspective, the persuasive power of Parker's rhetoric, which has been the prime target of investigation in the current study, serves to highlight the continuously escalating importance of consumption in people's lives, where the ability to choose the apt products is increasingly associated with the expression of identity and perhaps ultimately with the core meaning of present-day human existence. To help guide us through the growing number of consumption choices that our daily lives require we are in need of confident leaders like Parker to relieve our anxiety of choice and help convince us that the actions we take are appropriate. According to Stearns (2006:158–159), global consumerism involves "goals and concerns well beyond material acquisition" and is "a truly powerful international force in contemporary life", worth serious elaboration and debate, involving questions such as who gains and who loses when people's consumption habits change. Can the consumer's interests be seen to be unquestioningly promoted thanks to constant development and refinement of production techniques? Do consumption patterns lead to gains or losses for cultures? How do consumption habits affect different groups of producers? Are some production cultures worth preserving because they represent values over and above the present-day consumer's immediate sensuous gratification? Stearns (2006:158–159) suggests that although discussions of consumerism cannot provide definitive answers to such questions, reflections about the multi-faceted meanings and effects associated with consumption can nonetheless offer a more considered perspective enabling "a greater capacity to choose appropriate level of involvement, rather than be swept away by the latest enthusiasm". While the limited research focus of the current study has prevented the broader socio-cultural issues to be addressed, I nonetheless want to position the complex issue of present-day consumerism as an important one for future cross-scientific research in which linguistics has an important role to fulfil.

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