

Ours and Yours: A Discourse Analysis of Political Identity Markers in Slovenian Parliamentary Discourse

Katja Meden

Department of Knowledge Technologies, Jožef Stefan Institute;
Jožef Stefan International Postgraduate School;
Institute of Contemporary History,
Ljubljana, Slovenia
katja.meden@ijs.si

Abstract

With recent enrichments of the ParlaMint corpora, new opportunities have emerged for examining a range of political and discursive phenomena. This paper utilises the Slovenian ParlaMint corpus to investigate the construction of political identities through the possessive pronouns “our” (slv. *naš*) and “your” (slv. *vaš*) in Slovenian parliamentary discourse. The analysis uses a corpus-assisted approach, combining text-type, collocation, and keyword analyses of the lemmas *naš* and *vaš*. The data are drawn from three subcorpora compiled from speeches of Members of Parliament: (1) *Our*, containing speeches in which *naš* occurs; (2) *Your*, containing speeches in which *vaš* occurs; and (3) *Our&Your*, containing speeches in which both lemmas co-occur within the same sentence. The results indicate a clear alignment with established patterns of positive self-representation and negative other-representation. Occurrences of “our” are predominantly associated with positively evaluative discourse, with *Norms & Values* emerging as a central category. In contrast, occurrences of “your” are more typically linked to negative sentiment and keywords, with *Activities/Discourse* identified as the most prominent category. These findings suggest that these possessive pronouns function as markers of ideological positioning and discursive polarisation in Slovenian parliamentary debates.

Keywords: parliamentary discourse, political identities, ParlaMint

1. Introduction

Political identities (PI), a shared constructs of members of social collectivities, are expressed through language and discourse and defined within the realm of political power (Van Dijk, 2010). One such realm is Parliament, where discourse occurs in a controlled environment and can be investigated using parliamentary corpora, which contain transcriptions of essentially spoken language (Fišer and Pahor de Maiti, 2021). Parliamentary discourse is shaped not only by its procedural turn-taking but also by the additional context and relationships between actors on the parliamentary podium (Ilie, 2005; Modrijan, 2007).

One aspect of expressing political identity is the Us versus Them concept, which frames political struggles between two camps and underpins politically charged discursive strategies of defence and attack (Wirth-Koliba, 2016; Van Dijk, 2010). The concepts of identity and the “Us versus Them” distinction are therefore closely linked to political division (or polarisation). One such pattern is the use of possessive contrasts (e.g., “ours” vs. “yours”), which signal group alignment and introduce a division between groups with different political constituencies (e.g., “your side” vs. “our side”). In Slovenian discourse, this is commonly expressed through the pronouns “our” and “your” (slv. *naši in vaši*) which have historically appeared in various (political) distinctions (Zajc and Polajnar, 2012). In

this way, language not only reflects but also actively shapes political identities.

The study therefore aims to answer how political identities are expressed within Slovenian parliamentary debates through the use of the terms “our” and “your”, using corpus-assisted discourse analysis. Specifically, we are interested in the categories involved in the construction of political identities and how these relate to parliamentary debates.

The paper is organised as follows: Section 2 introduces the concept of political identities and its connection to parliamentary debates through the Us versus Them concept. Section 3 briefly outlines the approaches and methods used to analyse identity markers in discourse. The results of the analyses are presented in Section 4, where we specify the findings identified within each individual approach. Finally, we discuss the role of ‘our’ and ‘your’ as identity markers in Slovenian parliamentary debates and outline future research directions.

2. Political Identities and Related Work

The concept of “identity” is a complex notion in the humanities and social sciences that resists explicit definition (Van Dijk, 2010) and encompasses various expressions of the “self”.

Social identities are shared cognitive constructs expressed through discourse and interaction, and,

while generally stable, may evolve gradually over time. They are shared by members of social groups, whose members are typically aware of them (e.g., "I am a woman/man/citizen...") and are self-attributed, with individuals sometimes affiliating with multiple identities simultaneously (Stets and Burke, 2000; Van Dijk, 2010). Political identities, a subtype of social identity, share many characteristics with social identities. However, because they are grounded in political functions, they also possess specific additional characteristics (Van Dijk, 2010). Like social identities, they are relatively stable, but are formed later in an individual's life and are mostly ideological in nature. As they are defined within the domain of power, they inherently focus more on political in-groups (e.g. membership of a specific country, party, etc.) than on political out-groups, and are associated with different world views (such as the distinction between Left and Right). In discourse, these identities can be expressed through various descriptors, one of which are also personal and possessive pronouns (Van Dijk, 2010, 2018).

While identities are often related to the mental representations that people hold (which are inaccessible for analysis), there are specific characteristics or base categories that allow us to capture and articulate such identities. Van Dijk (2010) proposes the following basic categories: *Membership* (what we are), *Activities/Discourse* (what we do), *Aims* (what we want to achieve – politically), *Norms & Values* (what is politically good or bad), *Ideology* (what we believe in), *Group relations* (who are our political friends or enemies), and *Power resources* (what are our political affordances/what we are able to do).

Parliamentary discourse is closely tied to the construction of political and national identities (Skubic and Fišer, 2022; Riihimäki, 2019). Within this highly regulated setting, political identities are shaped not only by social markers (such as gender, age, ethnicity, or nationality), but also by political functions and institutional (parliamentary) roles (such as MP, minister, chairperson, or member of the coalition or opposition) (Van Dijk, 2004, 2018; Ilie, 2010). Additionally, parliamentary procedures can influence the use of identities, which are regulated through different pronouns, rhetorical strategies (such as positive self-representation or negative other-representation) (Van Dijk, 2004), or polite forms of address to parliamentary speakers (Modrijan, 2007; Ilie, 2005).

One of the most notable strategies in parliamentary discourse, which is closely connected with both political ideology and political identities, is the concept of Us versus Them, a direct expression of political identities through language (Van Dijk, 2010). This concept of political activity always involves an opposition camp (Them), as well as us and our al-

lies (Us), who are continually engaged in a struggle for political power and domination (Wirth-Koliba, 2016; Van Dijk, 2010). The struggles between in-group and out-group separations or polarisations follow the ideological square: emphasise Our good qualities, emphasise Their bad qualities; and conversely, de-emphasise Our bad qualities and de-emphasise Their good qualities (Van Dijk, 2010; Al Maani et al., 2022).

Research on the Us vs. Them construct in parliamentary debates has received increasing attention in recent years, particularly when using corpus-based methods. However, much of this research has focused on specific thematic domains and primarily examines personal pronoun use to explore notions of belonging, for example, the pronouns "we" and "us" (Räikkönen, 2024; Kryvenko, 2024). Some studies in Croatian have examined the possessive pronouns "naši i vaši" (which roughly correspond to the Slovenian terms "naši in vaši") through critical discourse analysis (Blagus Bartolec, 2024).

In Slovenian public and political discourse, the opposition between "naši" (ours) and "vaši" (yours) has developed into an implicit, (and at times explicit) marker of political division, which remains the greatest constant in the Slovenian parliamentary (Gašparič and Kustec, 2020) and political sphere (Mahmutović and Lovec, 2024), which is often conveyed through linguistic patterns. In relation to "naši" and "vaši", as demonstrated by Zajc and Polajnar (2012) in their analysis of historical newspaper discourse, these terms have historically appeared in diverse contexts of social differentiation, including racial, national, and ideological distinctions.

3. Methodology

The corpus-assisted discourse analysis comprises text type, collocation and keyword analysis of the speeches, containing lemmas "our" and "yours" within Slovenian parliamentary debates in ParlaMint-SI 5.1 corpus¹ (Erjavec et al., 2025a,b). The corpus covers the minutes of the National Assembly of the Republic of Slovenia from 3rd to the 8th legislative period (2000 – 2022). The corpus contains 81.683.385 tokens, 69.032.700 words and 311.347 utterances (i.e. speeches). The corpus also includes additional enrichments (Erjavec et al., 2025b), relevant to this analysis, specifically the information on utterance-level sentiment and political orientation of parliamentary groups and political parties. The analysis was done via NoSketch En-

¹The beta corpus includes corrected transcriptions and updated metadata, which will be incorporated in the next official CLARIN.SI ParlaMint release. Replication with version 5.0 yields minor frequency differences but does not affect the overall conclusions.

gine (Kilgarriff et al., 2014)(beta)² concordancer, which allows for subcorpus creation.

To conduct the analysis we created three subcorpora: 1) subcorpus *Our*: speeches containing occurrences of lemma *naš* (our), 2) Subcorpus *Your*: speeches containing occurrences of lemma *vaš* (your), 3) Subcorpus *Our&Your*: subcorpus containing speeches in which both lemmas co-occur within the same sentence.

As the analysis focuses on the discourse of Members of Parliament (MPs) and by extension, their political affiliations with parliamentary groups/political parties, we restricted our subcorpus creation by removing Chairperson, Minister and non-MP (guest) speakers speeches³. The basic distributions of the created subcorpora are shown in Table 1.

	Our	Your	Our&Your
Hits	119,440	38,362	2,578
% in Corpus	0.15	0.047	0.0032
Freq./mil. tokens	1462.23	469.64	31.56
Words	37,383,574	14,473,892	1,829,072
Tokens	31,593,806	12,232,2534	1,545,795

Table 1: Basic distributions of the subcorpora.

As the *Our&Your* subcorpora contain speeches, within which both “our” and “your” lemmas appear in a single sentence, this causes a slight overlap of speeches in the *Our* and *Your* subcorpora. Effectively, the overlapping speeches in *Our&Your* subcorpus represent only 3.72% within the *Our* subcorpus, and 9.47% of the *Your* subcorpus.

3.1. Text type Analysis

In the text-type analysis, we examined distributions across identity-relevant dimensions, specifically, party status (coalition vs opposition), political orientation (ideological positioning), and sentiment (polarity stance). These dimensions were selected because they represent institutional, ideological, and affective axes through which political identities are discursively constructed in parliamentary debates.

To support our interpretation, we used metrics available in NoSketch Engine: (raw) frequency (F), relative frequency in text type (RF), and relative density (RD), each conveying distinct information relevant to the analysis. Of these, relative density was highlighted as the primary metric, as it compares how frequent an item is in a specific text type

²The ParlaMint-SI 5.1 corpus is currently only available on the CLARIN.SI internal beta installation of the NoSketch Engine.

³Speeches included in the subcorpora met the following criteria: Speaker_role = “Regular”, Speaker_Minister = “nonMinister”, and Speaker_MP = “MP”, i.e. speeches by non-chairpersons with confirmed MP status who were not serving as ministers at the time.

relative to its frequency in the entire corpus, adjusted for the size of that text type. Values below 100% indicate that the item is less typical of that text type; values around 100% indicate equal typicality; and values above 100% indicate that the item is more typical or characteristic of that text type (Pahor de Maiti Tekavčič and Kryvenko, 2026; Relative text type frequency).

3.2. Collocation Analysis

We also investigated the lemma pairings for each subcorpus through collocation analysis. Specifically, we examined the lowercase lemmas within an L0R1 window (i.e. words that occur directly after our keyword in context (KWIC)) to capture direct references to “our” and “your” (e.g., “our government” and “your ministers”). We analysed the 20 most relevant collocational patterns, as identified by the LogDice metric (Brezina, 2018; Rychlý, 2008; Statistic measure LogDice), which measures the strength of association between collocates. While strong collocations are typically defined as those with LogDice values of 7 or above (Pahor de Maiti Tekavčič and Kryvenko, 2026; Jaworska and Kinloch, 2018), we also included weaker collocations in our analysis to account for the more constrained contextual window.

Collocates outside the top 20 with LogDice ≥ 5 were included if potentially relevant to political identity and subjected to manual review. For the *Our&Your* subcorpus, the context window was expanded to L3R3 to capture multi-word KWIC. Relevant collocates were examined in parliamentary context and annotated with a primary PI category, with secondary categories assigned where context-dependent variation was observed.

The annotation procedure can be further illustrated with an example: “*You, too, should think about whether it is worth ruining the future of your children and ours*”⁴. The reference to “children” invokes a widely shared value, framing their care as desirable and their neglect as undesirable; it is therefore assigned the primary PI-building category *Norms & Values*. The sentence also contains an implicit group distinction between “your” and “our,” which, in a parliamentary context, reflects divides such as coalition versus opposition and is captured as the secondary category *Group relation*.

Given the large volume of speeches, categorisation was supported by systematic manual review. Each collocate was assessed in its recurrent usage to determine alignment with PI categories prior to annotation. These categories capture functional tendencies in parliamentary discourse and are in-

⁴Koražija, Boštjan (2021). Zapisi sej Državnega zbora Republike Slovenije, Izredna 8. mandat, 90. izredna seja (22. 12. 2021)

terpreted as indirect markers of political identity, signalling alignment, values, or group affiliation rather than explicitly stating identity. Each annotation includes a justification and an illustrative example.⁵

3.3. Keyword Analysis

Lastly, we identified keywords most strongly associated with each subcorpus by alternately treating *Our* and *Your* as the focus relative to the other. We used lowercase alphanumeric lemmas and applied a smoothing parameter of $N = 20$, which adjusts sensitivity: higher values emphasise more frequent items, while lower values highlight rarer ones (Kilgarriff, 2009). We applied moderate smoothing ($N = 20$) to reduce noise from very low-frequency lowercase lemmas while preserving mid-frequency items. The comparison captures contrasts in in-group versus out-group identity construction.

Keyword identification was based on the simple Score metric implemented in NoSketch Engine, which compares normalised frequencies in the focus and reference corpora to determine keyness (Simple maths with keywords and terms). The representative keywords were manually reviewed through close reading to assess the contexts in which they appear.

4. Results

In line with the study’s main objective, the analyses produced the following findings.

4.1. Text type Analysis

To establish basic characteristics of the subcorpora, we examined several metadata fields (and their frequencies, relative frequency in text type and relative density), related to the political identity (party status and political orientation) and sentiment.

4.1.1. Sentiment

Table 2 shows the distributions across sentiment categories per individual subcorpus. The distribution of speeches in *Our* subcorpus across sentiment categories reveals a divergence between raw frequencies and normalised measures. In terms of raw frequencies, occurrences are more frequent in Negative speeches (83,080), suggesting that “our” is predominantly associated with negatively classified contexts at the speech level. However, both relative frequency (1,948.13) and relative density (133.23%) are highest in Positive speeches, indicating that “your” is more common and typical in positively classified discourse.

	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Our – F	17,404	83,080	18,956
Our – RTT	1,948.13	1,597.79	913.42
Our – RD(%)	133.23	109.27	62.47
Your – F	1,211	34,658	2,493
Your – RTT	135.55	666.54	120.13
Your – RD(%)	28.86	141.92	25.58
Our&Your – PF	137	2,240	201
Our&Your – RTT	15.34	43.08	9.69
Our&Your – RD(%)	48.59	136.50	30.69

Table 2: Distributions across sentiment categories per individual subcorpus and their respective metrics – raw frequency (F), relative frequency in text type (RTT) and relative density (RD). Additionally, the numbers in bold font highlight items and values that are most prominent for each category.

Conversely, this divergence is not observed in the *Your* and *Our&Your* subcorpora, where all three metrics consistently indicate that occurrences are more strongly associated with Negative sentiment.

4.1.2. Party status

Table 3 shows the distributions of speeches across party status (PS) categories per individual subcorpus.

	Coalition	Opposition	None
Our – F	48,216	63,845	7,379
Our – RTT	1,438.97	1,785.92	593.78
Our – RD(%)	98.41	122.14	40.61
Your – F	9,778	26,663	1,921
Your – RTT	291.82	745.84	154.58
Your – RD(%)	62.14	158.81	32.91
Our&Your – PF	716	1,736	126
Our&Your – RTT	21.37	48.56	10.14
Our&Your – RD(%)	67.71	153.86	32.13

Table 3: Party status text type analysis per individual subcorpus and their respective metrics – raw frequency (F), relative frequency in text type (RTT) and relative density (RD). Numbers in bold highlight prominent values in each category.

The distributions within all three corpora suggest that the occurrences are more common of Opposition speeches, both in terms of raw frequencies, as well as relative frequency in text type and relative density. This pattern might suggest that the lemmas are more systematically used in Opposition discourse, or relate to the role of Opposition in parliamentary proceedings. Additionally, relative density of Coalition category (98.41%) hovers slightly below 100%, which could suggest that occurrences are also equally typical of Coalition discourse.

4.1.3. Party Orientation

Table 4 shows distribution across party orientation (PO) categories per individual subcorpus.

⁵Materials are available on the [GitHub repository](#).

Party orientation	Our			Your			Our&Your		
	F	RTT	RD(%)	F	RTT	RD	PF	RTT	RD(%)
Left	6,203	1,726.98	118.11	2,564	713.84	152.00	174	48.44	153.49
Centre-left	20,604	1,409.04	96.36	6,089	416.41	88.66	456	31.18	98.81
-	4,035	388.35	26.56	1,006	96.82	20.62	61	5.87	18.60
Centre to centre-left	29,531	1,552.23	106.16	8,876	466.55	99.34	600	31.54	99.93
Centre	169	2,783.86	190.38	12	197.67	42.09	/	/	/
Centre to centre-right	945	1,318.34	90.16	162	226.00	48.12	11	15.35	48.62
Centre-right	22,470	2,298.11	157.16	3,916	400.51	85.28	305	31.19	98.84
Right	27,501	1,380.38	94.40	13,642	684.75	145.80	837	42.01	133.12
Right to far-right	7,982	2,232.01	152.64	2,095	585.8	124.74	134	37.47	118.72

Table 4: Party orientation text type distributions per individual subcorpus and their respective metrics – raw frequency (F), relative frequency in text type (RTT) and relative density (RD). Numbers in bold highlight prominent values within category.

The first observation concerns relative density, which shows that in all three subcorpora, occurrences are more typical for two PO categories: *Left* and *Right to far right*, which represent the two political extremes present in the subcorpora.

Additionally, in terms of relative density, occurrences within *Our* subcorpus seem to be more typical for multiple PO categories: *Centre* (RD: 190.38%), *Centre-right* (157.16%), *Right to far-right* (152.64%), *Left* (118.11%) and *Centre to centre-left* (106.16%) speeches, suggesting typicality across (almost) all folds of political spectrum, but less so for the *Centre to centre-right* (90.16%) and not typical (or less common) for discourse of speakers without explicit orientation (i.e. independent speakers, parliamentary groups of independent speakers and MPs in transition). However, it is important to note the sizeable difference in the raw frequencies for specific cases, such as in the case of *Centre* (which only contain 169 speeches overall).

Conversely, the occurrences within *Your* subcorpus are most commonly present (in terms of raw frequency) in *Right* speeches, but the relative density suggest the occurrences to be more typical of the *Left* speeches (152.00%), *Right* (145.80%) and *Right to far-right* (124.74%) speeches. As with the *Our* subcorpus, we observe notable differences in the raw frequencies for specific cases, where relative density showed greater typicality (for example, the *Left* contains 2,564 speeches compared to 13,642 *Right* speeches, with relatively similar relative density, but almost 10 times the frequency of *Left* speeches).

Lastly, in the subcorpus with both lemmas present within one sentence (*Our&Your* subcorpus) the occurrences most frequently appear in *Right* speeches (F), but according to relative density, seem to be quite typical in *Left* speeches (153.49%). Occurrences are also more common and more typical for *Right* (133.12%) and *Right to far-right* (118.72%) speeches. It is important to note that *Centre* speeches are not present in the *Our&Your* subcorpus.

4.2. Collocation Analysis

To examine the PI building categories more closely and help us answer the question, “Who or what is ours or yours?”, we analysed collocates that appear directly alongside the lemma(s). The relevant collocations and their political identity categories are shown in Table 5.

Our PI categories: The top 20 collocations identified within *Our* subcorpus most frequently refer to the *Norms & Values* category, followed by *Activities/Discourse*. However, within this range, there are no collocations that identify *Aims* or *Ideology* as the dominant PI category. This does not mean that such collocations do not exist, but rather that they may be ranked lower, which is the case for the *Aims* category.

The fact that *Aims*-related collocations fall outside the top 20 may also suggest that these aims, often resulting from discursive acts such as assessments or statements, are a secondary aspect of “our” speech patterns. They are used mostly to defend actions and explain the benevolent or honourable intentions of the speakers’ side. In contrast, the abundant presence of *Norms & Values*-related collocations indicates that, for “our” occurrences, norms and common virtues are extremely important and can be used to highlight the good work of our group (such as our good care for our people, homeland, etc.), while also contrasting these norms and values to criticise the opposing side (Them) and emphasise their poorly considered actions or negative traits.

Additionally, many collocations (e.g. our government, our children, our media, our politics) reveal a dual function of “our”. On the one hand, it highlights positive achievements associated with the speaker’s side (e.g. “pensions were harmonised to an extraordinary degree during our government’s term”). On the other, it signals national belonging and shared values, while also emphasising the opposition’s perceived failures or their harmful consequences (e.g. “Our government still does not understand this” or “the erosion of our media”).

Category	Naš	Vaš
Membership	stranka (party), vlada (government), stališče (position)	stranka (party), <i>poslanec</i> (MP), <i>minister</i> , <i>kandidat</i> (candidate)
Activities & Discourse	mnenje (opinion), ocena (evaluation), amandma (amendment), predlog (proposal)	odgovor (answer), mnenje (opinion), izjava (statement), trditev (claim), odločitev (decision), predlog (proposal), nastop (speech/appearance), stališče (position), argument
Aims	<i>cilj</i> (goal), <i>namen</i> (purpose), <i>interes</i> (interest), <i>zahteva</i> (demand), <i>pobuda</i> (initiative), <i>želja</i> (wish)	<i>namen</i> (purpose), <i>interes</i> (interest), <i>zahteva</i> (demand), <i>želja</i> (wish), <i>vladavina</i> (rule/governance), <i>vladanje</i> (governing), <i>pobuda</i> (initiative)
Norms & Values	država (state), družba (society), državljan (citizen), skupen (common), državljanica (citizen [female]), gospodarstvo (economy), otrok (child), prepričanje (belief), človek (human), praven (legal), zakonodajca (legislation), <i>nacionalen</i> (national), <i>ozemlje</i> (territory), <i>narod</i> (nation), <i>kmet</i> (farmer), <i>odgovornost</i> (responsibility), <i>rojak</i> (fellow citizen), <i>davkoplačevalec</i> (taxpayer), <i>kultura</i> (culture)	<i>otroci</i> (children)
Ideology	<i>vaš</i> (yours), <i>stran</i> (side)	predsednik (president), <i>vaš</i> (yours; <i>repetition</i>), <i>naš</i> (ours)
Group relations	vlada , koalicijski, sosedje	ministrstvo , stran , predhodnik , koalicijski , vlada , političen , kolega ,
Power resources	<i>ustava</i> (constitution), <i>medij</i> (media), <i>moč</i> (power), <i>volivec</i> (voter)	<i>mandat</i> (term/mandate), <i>resor</i> (department/portfolio), <i>volivec</i> (voter)
None	/	<i>pozornost</i> (attention)

Table 5: Categorisation of the collocations by their dominant PI category. Collocations in bold appear in the top 20 list, while those not in bold represent additional collocations outside the top 20 with a logDice value of 5 or higher.

Your PI categories The top 20 collocations identified within the *Your* subcorpus fall mainly under the *Activities/Discourse* category, followed closely by *Group relations*. In this range, there are no collocations indicating a relation to the *Aims* or *Norms & Values* categories. Additionally, one particular collocation, *pozornost* (attention) does not relate to any PI category; it appears only in the polite phrase *Hvala za vašo pozornost* ("Thank you for your attention"), which was the sole usage found in the manual review. The manual review also showed that collocations in the *Activities/Discourse* category are mostly used to highlight the actions of the opposing side as a point of blame, or to frame responsibility, caution, or criticism regarding decisions made by the opposing side.

Collocations in the *Group relations* category refer to various political groups – most often political opponents rather than allies, such as the government, the coalition, or the opposition. They are used to assign blame, criticise current or previous governments or parties, or imply that a subject belongs to a particular political camp. These expressions also reference shared political allies and often suggest that the opposing side benefits from the support or authority of these allies. Additionally, the collocations in the two most prominent categories (*Activities/Discourse* and *Group relations*) are often interconnected: one denotes the activity or behaviour of the opposing side, while the other identifies the explicit or implicit political group being blamed or targeted.

Our&Your PI categories There are only a few stable collocations that we were able to identify within *Our&Your* subcorpus, with a long tail of low-

frequency collocates or function words. (Semi-)stable collocations include *deliti* (to divide), *delitev* (division), *domovina* (homeland), *lev* (left), *desen* (right), *razlika* (difference), *skupen* (common), and *vaš* (yours). Among these, the *Ideology* category is dominant for all except *homeland* (*Norms & Values*).

4.3. Keyword Analysis

Lastly, to identify most representative words and themes within individual subcorpora, we conducted keyword analysis, comparing the two focus subcorpora (*Our* and *Your*) in comparison to one another.

4.3.1. Focal subcorpus: Our, Reference subcorpus: Your

The list of representative keywords contains relatively procedural keywords. The keywords with the highest Score include *predlagan* (adj. proposed), *novela* (amendment), *dopolnitev* (amendment), *direktiva* (directive), *narodni* (national), where all but the last keyword are related to various parliamentary activities (e.g. proposing an amendment to current legislation) and actions undertaken by MPs. This trend is also evident throughout the list of keywords. Several keywords reference speakers' parliamentary groups, both explicitly (e.g., *sab*, *desus*, *demokrat*) and implicitly (e.g., *poslanski*, *skupina*, *klub*).

Overall, there are not many words that reveal specific themes in these speeches, nor are there any strongly charged words, as opposed to keywords in the other comparison. This is understandable, as the speeches would at most emphasise their work

with words related to their activities, or use these to defend their work.

4.3.2. Focal subcorpus: Your, Reference subcorpus: Our

While the previous scenario provides relatively generic words associated with MP activities and membership, this is not the case with the keywords of the *Your* focus corpus, where the representative lemmas carry much stronger sentiment. The five keywords with the highest Score are *vaš* (yours), *ti* (you), *zanimati* (to interest), *prositi* (to ask), and *odgovor* (answer). The two lemmas with the highest scores (*vaš* and *ti*) were expected, given the composition of the *Your* sub-corpus and the interactional nature of the speeches. The lemma *ti* represents various second-person pronoun forms (e.g., *vi*, *vam*, *vas*). Contrary to the first scenario, the list includes many explicitly or contextually negative keywords, as well as politically charged keywords, which serve as attacks on the opposing side, which can be seen in Table 6.

Keywords	
Verbs (actions/processes)	<i>zavajati</i> (to mislead), <i>očitati</i> (to reproach), <i>odstopiti</i> (to resign), <i>lagati</i> (lie), <i>žaliti</i> (to insult), <i>oprostiti</i> (to forgive), <i>hvaliti</i> (to praise / boast), <i>sprenevedati</i> (to feign ignorance), <i>kadrovati</i> (to appoint personnel), <i>izjaviti</i> (to state)
Nouns (entities, concepts, institutions)	<i>interpelacija</i> (interpellation), <i>magnetogram</i> (verbatim transcript), <i>laž</i> (lie), <i>izjava</i> (statement), <i>obtožba</i> (accusation), <i>ovadba</i> (criminal complaint), <i>protest</i> , <i>neresnica</i> (falsehood / untruth), <i>norec</i> (fool / madman), <i>tožilstvo</i> (prosecution / public prosecutor's office), <i>neumnost</i> (stupidity / nonsense), <i>levičar</i> (leftist)...
Adjectives	<i>proceduralen</i> (procedural), <i>koalicijski</i> (coalition / coalitional), <i>ministrsko</i> (ministerial) ...

Table 6: Examples of keywords representative of *Your* subcorpus with lexical negative sentiment, and keywords with lexically neutral or positive sentiment but used in explicitly negative contexts.

We also identified keywords associated with specific themes, including Covid-19 terms (e.g. *maska*, *ventilator*) and references to public media (e.g. *novinar*, *rtv*), though these were less frequent. Mentions of parliamentary groups (*sd*), ministerial roles (*minister*, *ministrica*), and MPs' names (*janša*, *grims*, *gorenak*, *tanko*) were more common, often as targets of criticism.

The keyword *usta* (mouth), while less prominent, is frequently used figuratively in expressions such as "*polna usta so vas*", "*živeti iz rok v usta*", "*iz ust vaših ...*", and "*zapiranje ust*".

One of the most notable characteristics of these keywords relates to the sentiment, expressed within. The list includes keywords that inherently carry (lexical) negative sentiment, such as *zavajati* (to mislead), *laž* (lie), as well as lexically neutral (or even

positive) words that are used in a negative context, though such cases are rarer. An example of such case is *hvaliti* (to praise)⁶:

"[...] but explaining to people what is good and positive in this law is, of course, the task of the government and coalition MPs. So don't expect us in the opposition to praise **your law**."

The keyword analysis reveals a clear discursive distinction between Ours and Yours, and thus between Us and Them. The negativity identified in the *Your* subcorpus suggests that the term is often used as a direct or figurative form of attack. In contrast, the neutral to mildly positive sentiment and the absence of keywords carrying strong sentiment in the *Our* subcorpus indicate, on the one hand, the procedural or administrative nature of the speeches and, on the other, an emphasis on the effectiveness and outcomes of "our" work.

5. Conclusion

The paper presented work on the corpus-assisted discourse analysis of political identities within Slovenian parliamentary debates. The methods used aimed to capture more general characteristics of the use of terms "ours" and "yours" through text types, collocation and keyword analysis.

Overall, the results show that occurrences of the lemma "ours" are more frequently associated with neutral or positive speeches and keywords, and are characteristic across different political orientations. Regarding PI categories, the *Norms & Values* category is more frequent, which may indicate a positive self-representation of Us and Our qualities, and what "we" value and emphasise (e.g. homeland, our people, etc.). Additionally, certain collocates reveal the dual function of "our", which can also denote (national or other) common belonging. Occurrences of the lemma "your" are predominantly associated with negative sentiment and evaluative keywords, which are more typical of contributions from ideological extremes and more frequent in the *Discourse/Activity* and *Group Relations* PI categories, reflecting negative other-representation.

Although instances in the *Our&Your* subcorpus (where both terms appear in a single sentence) are too limited for quantitative analysis, they proved valuable qualitatively: manual inspection of sentiment, collocations, and keywords revealed signs of political polarisation (i.e. *naši in vaši*). Taken together, the findings align with the ideological square: "our" foregrounds positive self-

⁶Kociper, Maša. (2021). Zapisi sej Državnega zbora Republike Slovenije, Redna 8. mandat, 91. izredna seja (27. 12. 2021).

presentation, while “your” reinforces negative other-presentation (Van Dijk, 2010).

While previous research focused on the expressions of Us versus Them dichotomy through different lenses and approaches (Kryvenko, 2024; Rääkkönen, 2024; Blagus Bartolec, 2024; Al Maani et al., 2022), direct comparisons with prior work are limited. Nevertheless, this study contributes to research on discursive polarisation by showing that, beyond personal pronouns, possessive constructions also encode in-group and out-group distinctions. It further demonstrates how the *naši–vaši* pattern relates to the construction of political identities in Slovenian parliamentary debates.

These results indicate a potential direction for future research. The findings of this preliminary analysis could be extended by systematically examining shifts in terminology across successive legislative periods. Such a diachronic analysis would allow a clearer assessment of discursive change over time. Moreover, this analysis could be complemented by investigating additional dimensions, particularly the institutional roles and strategic positioning of parliamentary actors, to better contextualise patterns of term usage within broader political dynamics.

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7. Literature

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