

The role of interjections in Austrian parliamentary debates

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Background

Interjections and **interruptions** play an integral part in the communicative dynamics between representatives and parties in parliamentary sessions.

Classifications of interruptions [1, 2, 3] e.g.:

- **Verbal** vs. non-verbal (e.g., applause, laughter)
- **Individual** (e.g., single MP) vs. collective (e.g., party or faction)
- Institutionalised (e.g., call to order) vs. **non-institutionalised** (e.g., interjection by MP)

Most previous research on interjections is based on small data sets and/or a qualitative approach [1, 4, 5]. Recent comprehensive studies have pioneered the analysis of interjections in the German Bundestag and regional parliaments with quantitative approaches [6, 7].

Data

ParlAT corpus [8]:

Coverage

- Verbatim records (*Stenographische Protokolle*) from the **National Council** (*Nationalrat*)
- Legislative periods: XX to XXV (i.e., 1996–2017)

Size and Annotation

- 952 documents
- ≈ 75 000 000 tokens
- Part-of-speech tagged & lemmatised
- Speech type, interruption type, speaker ID, date etc.

Affective & abstractness norms [9]:

Coverage

- Arousal, valence
- Concreteness, imageability

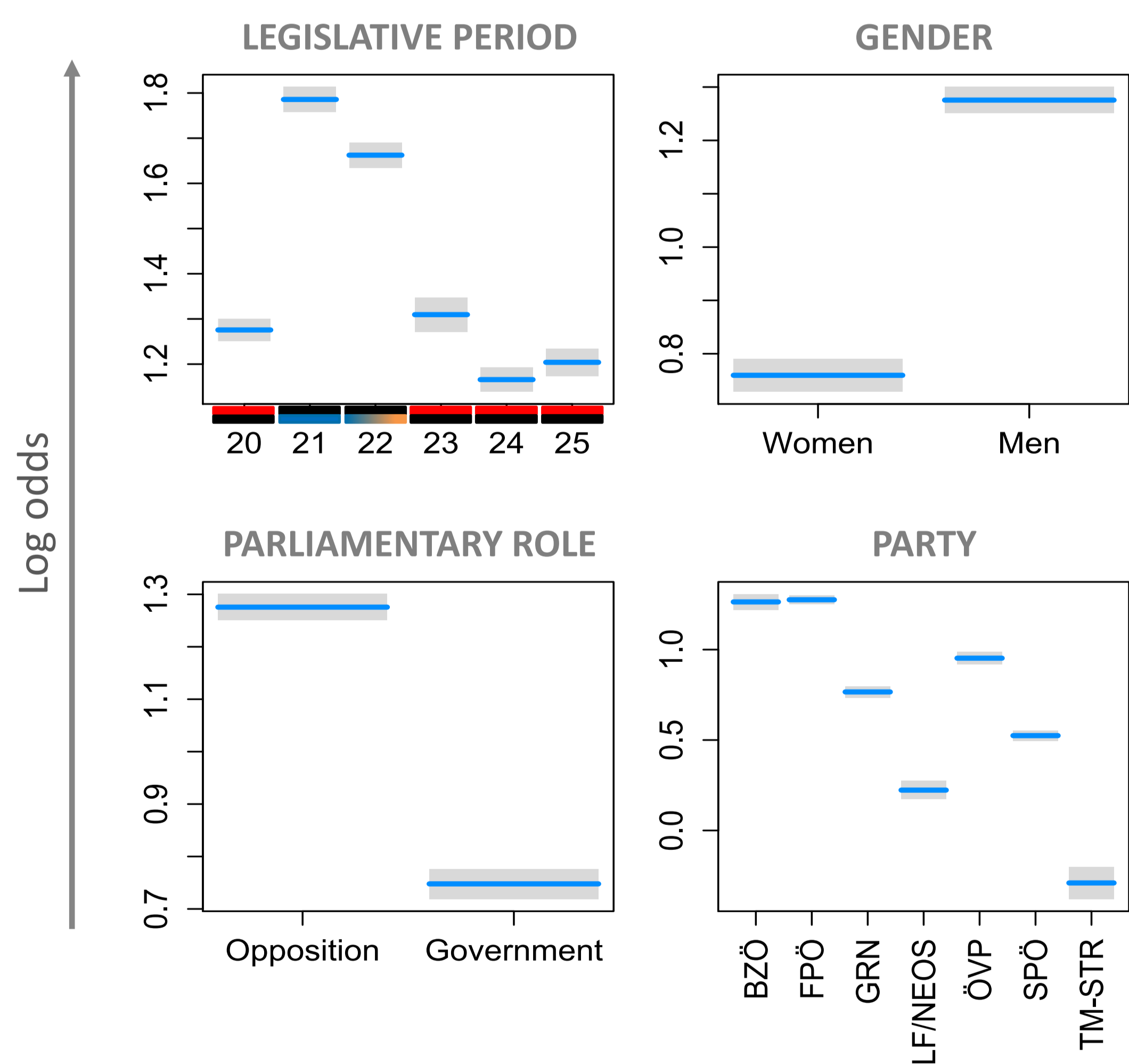
Size

- 350 000 German lemmas (automatically generated with skip gram based on human ratings)

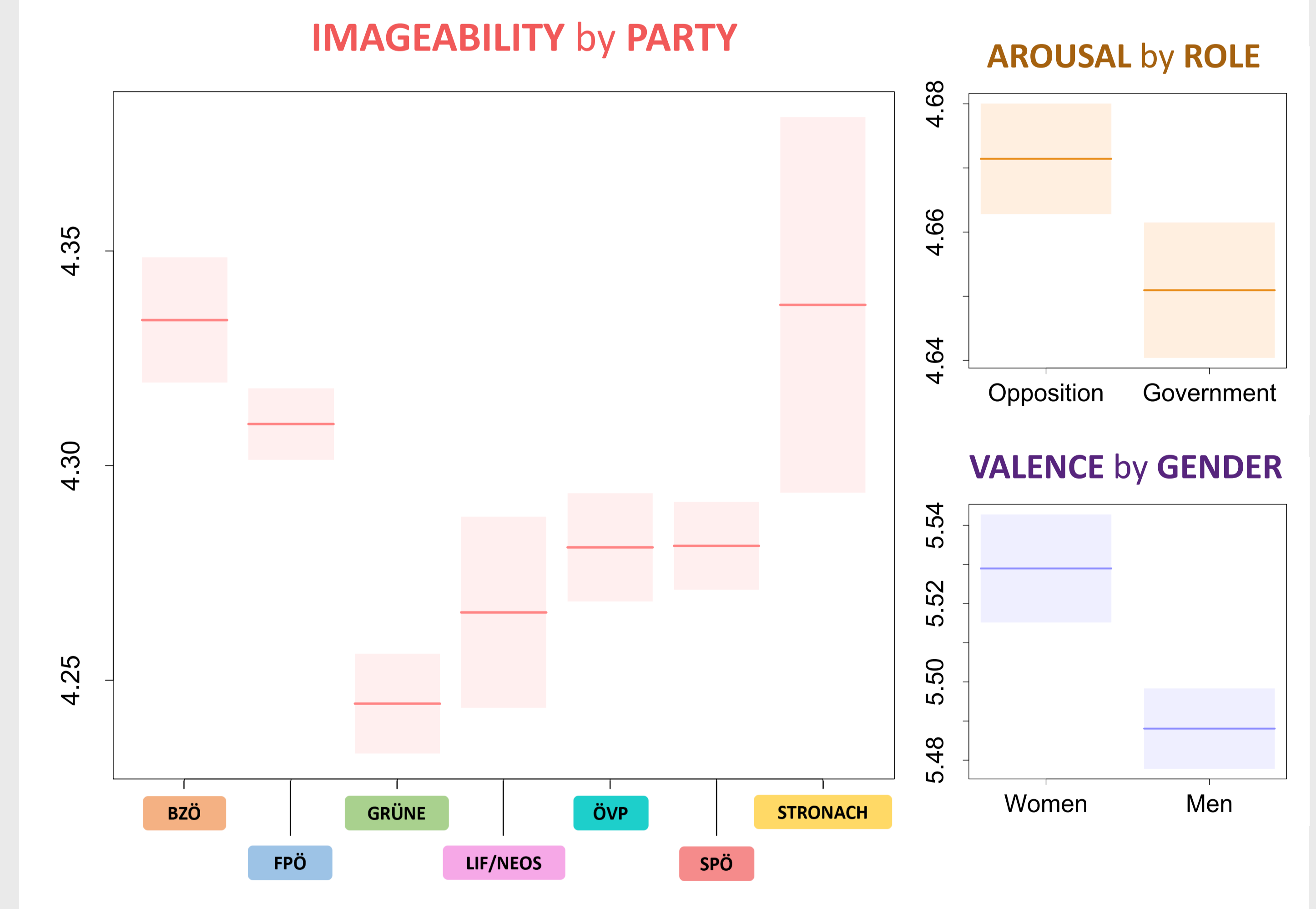


How are interjections distributed in the Austrian Parliament?

How do interjections differ in language style?



Interjections were **most common** during **right/centre-right government**. **Right-wing parties** (BZÖ, FPÖ, ÖVP) are **more likely** to utter interjections. **Opposition parties** are **more likely** to utter interjections. **Men** are **more likely** to utter interjections.



Liberal parties' interjections are **less imageable**, **less arousing** and **more positive**. The **oppositions'** interjections are **more arousing** and **less positive**. **Women's** interjections are **less concrete**, and **more positive**.

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