



Fat talk in online discourse

A comparison of pro-anorexia and body positivity on
social media

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Abstract

This study will compare two online communities; pro-anorexia and body positivity through a retrieval of posts tagged with the hashtags #thinspo ('thin inspiration') and #bopo ('body positivity') respectively. Two corpora of 120 posts per community were comprised and then processed in AntConc with the aid of a corpus linguistic approach. The data was then analysed with the aid of Arroyo and Harwood's categorisation of 'fat talk' (2014), a typically female type of discourse often containing self-derogatory body commentary, to identify linguistic markers of the two groups. The results showed that body positive posts contained more we-talk, positive affect in terms of affirmation of self and others, as well as describing change of their relationships to their bodies rather than an external change of their bodies. Pro-anorexia discourse showed a general pattern of expressing more negative affect (disappointment, fear, disgust) as well as making negative self-evaluations. Unlike previous research, hardly any 'we-talk' was found the pro-anorexia discourse, indicating a lack of community.

Keywords: *corpus linguistics, fat talk, body positivity, pro-anorexia, SNS*

1. Introduction

Over the last 20 years, social networking sites (SNS) have provided new means of connecting with each other online—and with that, new types of communication. This accessibility has also made it a lot easier to find likeminded people online that share similar hobbies and interests as oneself. Because fat talk is such a common occurrence among women in real life, it is hardly surprising that weight-loss or body-focused talk is a common occurrence on social media as well; it can be found virtually everywhere. According to facts presented by the largest non-profit organisation for eating disorders in the United States, NEDA (National Eating Disorder Associating), nearly all girls (95%) that are active on some type of SNS report seeing negative body or appearance comments ('Statistics & Research on Eating Disorders', 2018).

An internalization of western[ized] beauty ideals has been shown to contribute to negative affect and greater body dissatisfaction with women, often because the ideals create 'unrealistic goal[s] for most women' (Stice, Nemeroff, & Shaw, 1996). It has been found that women's self-worth and sense of self are closely connected to the appearance of their bodies (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014) and that female communication often include weight- and body-related topics. This type of body-focused, often negative, talk has been named 'fat talk' and can be described as a type of communication that has its roots in body dissatisfaction (Nichter, 2000). On certain social media platforms, such as Instagram and Tumblr, there is a multimodality aspect that allow users to share pictures of their own weight-loss, or inspiration for weight loss sometimes known as 'thinspiration' (a portmanteau of the words 'thin' and 'inspiration') on pro-anorexia websites (Juarascio, 2010; Norris, Boydell, Pinhas, & Katzman, 2006).

'Pro-anorexia' is a term used by weight-loss oriented online communities that has been around since early 2000, and that started as a secluded space for anorexia sufferers to share stories and experiences (Dias, 2003). However, it has also become a place for to sharing weight-loss tips and tricks and supporting one another with weight loss (Juarascio, 2010). Although pro-anorexia discourse has shown to have a negative impact on feelings of self-worth, as well as increasing the risk of developing disordered eating behaviours, it has also been shown to provide important social aspects for people who may have issues getting the same social support in real life (Juarascio, Shoaib, &

Timko, 2010; De Choudhury, 2015), especially when suffering from diagnosed eating disorders such as anorexia (Dias, 2003).

However, not all weight-focused online communities are typified by eating disorders. In later years, blogs and forums for people who start ‘obesity blogs’ with a more distinct ‘before-after weight loss narrative’ (Atanasova, 2017) have also become more popular. Studies of ‘obesity blogs’ (2017) as well as how makeover-focused discourse, as presented in Sastre, have ‘exposed the rhetoric of choice-driven, bodily-oriented self-improvement’ (2014), which is often marked by a discourse that praises weight loss, and often describe bodily transformation as being types of journeys (Atanasova, 2017; Sastre, 2014). Shugart (2010), as cited in Sastre, describes how the ‘obese body is represented as a materialization of some other, key, unresolved issue, specifically, emotional pain’ (2014: 938). Fatness, in this manner, has also been referred to as ‘the obesity epidemic’, which has caused fatness to be portrayed as a medical condition rather than a bodily variety, and ‘may make competing frames of “fat” as a neutral and positive form of biological diversity more difficult to promote’ (Saguy, & Almeling, 2008: 78).

However, in later years, ‘body-positivity’, ‘body acceptance’ and terms that are used in communities that are attempting to reject normative beauty standards (such as thinness) and create a safe space for people of all shapes and sizes (Sastre, 2014). These communities are places where ‘fat’ may be a word that can be used as a neutral descriptor rather than as something sickly.

Whereas the connection between pro-anorexia and the use of social networking sites have been quite comprehensively studied, the discourse of the body positive community has not been previously studied in a combination of quantitative and qualitative investigation, which will be conducted in this study. This study will serve as a comparison of self-presentation styles of a ‘pro-anorexia’ community and a ‘body positive’ community. This is interesting, as previous studies merely have been investigating communities with a focus on bodily transformation, in regard to decreasing body size, whereas the body positive community claims to promote body acceptance (Sastre, 2014) and this study will investigate linguistic markers of this previously scarcely studied body positive discourse.

The aim of this study is to compare fat talk in two different online communities with body-focus; one that focuses on body acceptance, and one that is more focused on changing one's body. Since body positivity is a relatively new movement having barely been studied, this study will work to uncover linguistic markers of the discourse, as well identify similarities and differences to how fat talk is performed in pro-anorexia discourse. The study will aim to answer the following research questions:

R1. In what way is fat talk used to create community within the groups, if at all?

R2. In what way does fat talk differ on pro-anorexia and body positive platforms?

R3. Does body positivity share linguistic markers of weight-loss oriented communities?

2. Background

This section of the paper aims to describe the nature of social media as platforms for creating community. Further, it will present corpus linguistics and fat talk as the theoretical framework for data analysis, as well as presenting previous works.

2.1. Social media and online communities

With the new social networking sites, such as Instagram and Tumblr, new ways of communicating and acquiring information has emerged. One aspect of this study is the community-creating aspect of new social media. Going online provides new ways to access and talk to people in different groups than one would normally be able to; it's supplied us with a way to seek out like-minded people.

Online communities using microblogging (such as Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram) have different linguistic features than traditional blogging, news articles or other types of text (Zappavigna, 2012). A lot of social networking sites allow *hashtags* (#). Zappavigna, and Martin describe hashtags as a type of metadata that tags posts in a way that 'convoke or "call together" potential personae or communities' (2017: p. 5). By using a hashtag to mark a certain post, other people who are looking for posts on that subject are able to tap in to the ongoing conversation. Zappavigna and Martin have shown that social tagging has been shown important in 'forging networks of solidarity' (2017: p. 1).

2.1.1 Thinspiration and pro-anorexia

#Thinspiration, (a merge of the words ‘thin’ and ‘inspiration’) or ‘#thinspo’, is often used within pro-anorexia communities online. The pro-anorexia (sometimes shortened to pro-ana) communities subsist on several social media platforms and is known for framing the eating disorders anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa, as well as extreme weight loss, as being ‘lifestyle choices’ rather than medical conditions or psychiatric illnesses (De Choudhury, 2015; Juarascio, Shoaib, & Timko, 2010). Often, the pro-anorexia communities serve as ‘support groups’ of sorts, in which the participants are likely to ‘support’ others in the community by encouraging disordered restrictive eating behaviours and dissuading others from getting psychiatric help as well as providing social interactions for people that may be lacking thereof in their everyday life outside of social media (De Choudhury, 2015; Juarascio, Shoaib, & Timko, 2010). The websites have also been describes as serving as a safe space, where eating disorder (sometimes shortened to ED) sufferers can talk more explicitly about their feelings without judgement (Dias, 2003).

The hashtag #thinspiration, and #thinspo, are tags used within the community that often provide posts that include imagery of slim or emaciated female bodies (Juarascio, Shoaib, & Timko, 2010). The pictures are meant to serve as a motivator for the readers to maintain their weight loss or eating disorders. In this study, the hashtag used to find the pro-anorexia community is #thinspo. This choice was made despite the fact that the visual aspect of the posts is disregarded, and this is solely a text-based analysis. Additionally, this alternative allows for the possibility of setting of the posts as similar to the #bopo as possible; seeing that #bopo posts are always accompanied by some type of visual element.

Finally, a majority of previous studies claimed that pro-anorexics exhibit more negativity than healthy individuals, and several of them seem to consider that a social alienation or lack of social community could be possible cause for exhibiting such negative behaviour and for seeking out a like-minded community online (De Choudhury, 2015, p. 5; Juarascio, Shoaib, & Timko, 2010, p. 395).

2.1.2 Body positivity

Body positivity is a movement, as described by Sastre as ‘a [response] to the barrage of media images reflecting a narrow bodily ideal’ (2014: 929). The posts that are posted within the body positive communities are often images of different body types followed by personal statements about body acceptance.

One of the first real studies of body positivity, by Sastre, was a study of three different websites that claimed to ‘subscribe to a body positive philosophy’ (2014: 931). The study served as an overview of the three websites, and what was then found was ‘prominent themes and categories’ (2014: 932).

Although body positivity has not nearly been explored enough, Sastre identifies body positivity firstly in 2012, as a movement lead by singer Lady Gaga as in order to raise awareness of eating disorders as well as promoting body acceptance and self-love (2014). The body positive community that has been described as being ‘individual blog posts linking the move towards a healthier body image to the notion of the (captured and shared) personal journey’ (Sastre, 2014: 933). This ‘journey to self acceptance’ is often shared in order to allow other women to take part of their stories (2014: 938).

Some linguistic markers have also been found in body positive discourse. One of the markers that Sastre found through her research was that posts often ‘articulat[e] the relationship to one’s body as a process’ (Sastre, 2014: 939) and sometimes using the ‘journey’ metaphor, which has been found in other weight-loss blogs such as obesity-blogs (Atanasova, 2017). One difference between traditional weight-focused discourse and what has been found in Sastre’s brief 2014 study of body positive discourse is that it ‘shift[s] the focus from the modification of one’s body to the modification of one’s relationship to one’s body’ (Sastre, 2014: 939). Body positive discourse has also been found to exhibit some negative affect in terms of negative emotions or descriptions of their personal worries and internal battles. The ‘struggles’ are however often ‘framed around the catharsis engendered by a newfound positive relationship to one’s body’ (Sastre, 2014: 938).

It is important to keep in mind that Sastre was one of the first (and is still today, one of few) people to look at body positivity online. However, since the forums for this type of discourse have changed since Sastre’s study was conducted, and the research was qualitative rather than quantitative, her results are by no means expected to be the

same as the results of this study. By doing a corpus linguistic analysis, as well as identifying what type of fat talk is present in the corpus, this study will be conducted while keeping these general tendencies, as identified by Sastre, in mind.

2.1.3 Instagram and Tumblr

Instagram is an online community of more than 800 million users that allows for the users to post pictures and textual content on a personal 'wall'. The site has the visual element as its most important element, and a picture therefore has to be attached to every post. However, the picture that is posted does not necessarily have to be a photograph. The accounts and posts are then available for the public to like and comment posts, or 'follow' (subscribe to) other accounts.

At time of writing, there were 633023 posts tagged with #bopo (body positive) and over 5 million posts tagged with #bodypositive were published on Instagram, which has been identified as the main platform for body positive content (Cwynar-Horta, 2016; Selzer, 2017). This is why all the posts from the body positive community were only retrieved by searching the hashtag #bopo on the SNS Instagram.

Tumblr is another microblogging platform that similarly to Instagram, allows user to upload and/or 'reblog' pictures, videos, GIFs and text in multimedia posts. The posts don't necessarily have a word limit (like the 240 character limit that Twitter has), however, the posts tend to be shorter in length, following the pattern of a microblogging platform, where posts are shorter than 'traditional' blog posts. Pro-anorexia posts have been collected from the SNS Tumblr, as Tumblr is 'replete with triggering content for enacting anorexia as a lifestyle choice' (De Choudhury, 2015). Tumblr has a more established community for pro-anorexia communities; and has previously been studied in numerous instances (De Choudhury, 2015; Xu, Compton, Lu, & Allen, 2014). Therefore, all posts tagged with #thinspo were collected solely from the website Tumblr.

Since both websites use hashtags, there are occurrences of body positive content on Instagram as well as pro-anorexia content on Instagram. However, there are not the clear-cut and now well-established communities as there are with body positivity on Instagram, and pro-anorexia on Tumblr. Therefore, I have chosen to collect posts from

two different source, where the communities are well-established and therefore as equal as possible, in order to create as unbiased content as possible.

In 2012, Tumblr declared a new policy banning posts containing pro ana and posts said to encourage self-harm and eating disorders. When searching for terms that are potentially harmful, such as #thinspo, a public service announcement is displayed (Schott & Langan, 2015). The announcement says the following:

Everything okay? If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, NEDA is here to help: call 1-800-931-2237 or chat with them online. If you are experiencing any other type of crisis, consider talking confidentially with a volunteer trained in crisis intervention at www.imalive.org, or anonymously with a trained active listener from 7 Cups of Tea. And, if you could use some inspiration and comfort in your dashboard, go ahead and follow NEDA on Tumblr.

To further enforce their policy, Tumblr monitors and deletes posts that use certain hashtags and/or contain triggering content (Schott & Langan, 2015).

Instagram has a similar message that shows up when searching triggering hashtags, that says 'Can we help? Posts with words or tags that you're searching for often encourage behaviour that can cause harm and even lead to death. If you're going through something difficult, we'd like to help' (accessed 15 May 2018). The site then offers a variety of options; talk to a friend, contact a helpline, and 'get tips and support'. Instagram also has a 'report' function on certain posts that may lead to deleting of the post if it is deemed harmful content.

After the disclaimers are shown, both Tumblr and Instagram allow access to the posts, so the opportunity to view them is not completely removed. However, it is important to keep in mind that there is some control exerted on the websites as it may affect the results in the study.

2.2. Fat talk

'Fat talk' is a weight-focused discourse amongst women, first researched and coined as a term by Mimi Nichter and Nancy Vuckovic in 1994. While fat talk is described as a

phenomenon within sociology, fat talk can also positively be researched as a linguistic act of communication. Fat talk is a type of discourse that typically entails negative comments or conversation about body, often as the general statement ‘I’m so fat!’ and can be heard in within groups of women of all ages, and not only young women, or women that have an intention of losing weight (Nichter, 2000; Britton, Martz, Bazzini, Curtin, & LeaShomb, 2006).

However, fat talk does not only serve negative purposes, but functions as a way of bonding between girls. By saying ‘I’m so fat’, it allows a girl to disclose vulnerability and seek ‘positive feedback and social support’ (Nichter, 2000).

2.2.1 Categories of fat talk

Arroyo and Harwood, who have defined fat talk as interpersonal communication, suggested that fat talk ‘is the means by which women construct, come to terms with, and fall victim to societal ideals about the ideals of weight’ (2015: 117). The categorisation of fat talk by Arroyo and Harwood is based on their own data from 2014; where 138 participants between the ages 18 to 70+ took part in a study that required the partakers to identify and perform fat talk by responding to questions provided by Arroyo and Harwood (2014). In total, 828 comments in the fat talk were provided and then analysed by Arroyo and Harwood who then structured a number of themes and topics that seemed to be the most common ones within fat talk (2014).

Since not all types of fat talk that are categorized by Arroyo and Harwood could be found within the corpora, this study will focus on five categories that occur fairly often, albeit in different ways, in the corpora. The five categories that will briefly be presented in this section are: we-talk and self-identification with a group, discussion of coping strategies, expressions of fears and evaluations of self.

We-talk is a type of ‘social-identity-level communication phenomenon’; where the ‘we’ refers to the group/groups that the speaker is a part of or identifies with, i.e. all fat people, all skinny people, all anorexic people, etc. (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014). We-talk has been found within pro-anorexia online discourse, where the communication reveals ‘an awareness of stereotypes, as well as a sense of solidarity with others who fall victim for the stereotypes’ (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014).

Self-identifying comments such as ‘I’m fat’ can express a range of different things: the general ‘I’m fat’ can be a comment expressed by all body sizes with the intent of expressing general negative emotions (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2015; Nichter, 2000), seeking feedback (‘No, you’re not!’), or be used as self-identifying with a group in order to create solidarity (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014; Nichter, 2000).

Discussion of coping strategies are ways that one express how to handle emotions that come with fat talk; a pattern of this could be tips and tricks of how to lose weight within the pro anorexia community (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014).

Expressions of fears more often than not a fear of gaining weight. According to Arroyo and Harwood, the fear of being, staying, or becoming fat comes with social aspects that changes how one is treated (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014).

Evaluations of self often come from a more emotional place. According to Arroyo and Harwood, this type of fat talk reveal more about the speaker’s opinion about self, since evaluation of self is a direct connection between self-worth and the body. However, negative evaluations of self are not the only type of self-evaluation, it can also be neutral or even positive (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014).

Although most people fluctuate their weight during their lifetimes, and it is normal to do so, Arroyo and Harwood claim that certain parts of the weight spectra are ‘treated as static categories’ (2014: 179); a person who is on the higher end of the weight spectra is considered a fat person. Different ends of the of the spectra are also connected to certain judgement of their living conditions (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014), such as the judgement being of a higher weight necessarily would implicate health issues, or a low weight indicate that the person would have some type of eating disorder.

The communication of weight identity is an important part of the theorization of fat talk. According to Arroyo and Harwood, there are several ways to communicate identity in terms of weight; it can be personal categorisation, relational categorisation and categorisation as a social group. In categorisation of people, identity serves as an important process. For instance, the usage of the term ‘fat’ to describe someone else puts them in a certain identity group, one that also contains certain stereotypes such as laziness (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014).

2.3. Corpus linguistics

Corpus linguistics is a quantitative approach to linguistic analysis that allows for finding general patterns in larger bodies or quantities of text or in a way that is fast and efficient. One of the qualities of a corpus linguistic approach is that it reveals linguistic information and patterns in a way that is difficult to achieve manually. Thus, relieving the researcher of the ‘painstaking’ assignment of uncovering this information manually (Baker, 2006).

For this paper, the corpus linguistic approach has been applied successfully. It is a beneficial method as it allows for a more objective analysis, in that it ‘place[s] a number of restrictions on our cognitive biases’ (Baker, 2006: 6). Since it is possible that doing solely a qualitative analysis of data would allow for the interpretation to be coloured by the pre-conceived ideas of how pro-anorexia and body positivity websites are expected to talk about body fat; a corpus linguistic approach lessens bias in that it presents a number of patterns (that may not be expected) that can then be further analysed with the help of other theories.

One criticism of corpus linguistics is that it is not nuanced enough method, as it detaches the text from the contextual aspect of discourse that may entail important societal and social aspects (Baker, 2006). This has hopefully been avoided by using specific data. The posts collected for the corpora are specific for the context, seeing as they all contain the word ‘fat’ at least once per post, as well as being quite short in length. This, along with complementing corpus linguistics with the previously presented fat talk theory which aids in further analysis of the text will hopefully lead to an as objective analysis as possible.

2.4. Previous studies

According to a linguistic study of discourse within obesity blogs, it has been found that blogs covering the topic of body weight tend to exhibit more ‘language of affect’ (Atanasova, 2017: 2), meaning that it contains more expressive terms, such as metaphors and emotionally loaded vocabulary.

Prior studies on pro-anorexia communities online have been conducted quite comprehensively and on several different social platforms and blogs such as Myspace

and Facebook (Juarascio, Shoaib, & Timko, 2010), Tumblr (De Choudhury, 2015) as well as Twitter and Instagram (Tiggemann, Churches, Mitchell, & Brown, 2018).

In more recent times, studies have come to cover the emergence of other body-focused hashtags, such as #fitspo (a portmanteau of ‘fit’ and ‘inspiration’), a similar type of motivational posts, where the focus lies on exercise and fitness rather than starvation. Recent studies are then problematizing the similarities that the content has with the hashtag share with #thinspo (Uhlmann, Donovan, Zimmer-Gembeck, Bell, & Ramme, 2018).

In 2015, Munmun De Choudhury, conducted a study in which she compared pro-anorexia and pro-recovery communities on Tumblr. The study was performed in such a way that 55334 posts on Tumblr were collected and analysed. By relying on previous studies within the field, De Choudhury focused on three affective processes: positivity, negativity and objectivity (2015: 3). From this study, De Choudhury could conclude that pro-anorexics showed ‘a lowered sense of self-esteem’ (2015: 5), which she claims is ‘likely due to dissatisfaction with normative notions of idealized body weight and shape’ (2015: 5). The study also showed that the communities exhibit distinct ‘linguistic markers’, such as greater negative affect in their posts (De Choudhury, 2015). According to De Choudhury, participants on pro-anorexia platforms are more likely to form communities in which they share posts with tips and tricks, express their ‘fear of gaining weight’ (2015: 1), as well as spreading images of ‘thin idealized female images’ (2015: 1).

3. Design of the present study

In this section, the data collection method as well as the method used for analysing the data will be presented. Further, the methodological issue of multimodality will be covered.

3.1. Data

In order to conduct corpus linguistic research of the two communities, data have been collected separately into two corpora, which will be referred to as the *#thinspo corpus* and the *#bopo corpus*.

Due to the social medias’ policies against triggering behaviour, it is of importance to carry out an ongoing retrieval of Tumblr posts, on a close-to-daily basis, to access

posts before they get deleted and by doing so collecting a true representation of the posts. During retrieval, posts had to be selected manually, both on Tumblr and on Instagram. Tumblr does, however, allow for a sorting of the posts by their media elements.

There was a general tendency for the posts on Instagram to be longer, and the corpora were difficult to keep exactly the same size; therefore, the limitation of word count was held to limit the differences between the two corpora. The selection for Tumblr was conducted by searching for posts that included the hashtag ‘thinspo’ or ‘bopo’ on Tumblr and Instagram, respectively. The criterion for the two sites were the same, in order to make the corpora as comparable as possible. Posts had to have a word count between 50 and 300 words and include the word ‘fat’ as implying body size (i.e. posts about fat as regards to nutritional aspects were disregarded) in order to make the results as relevant as possible for the analysis of fat talk.

To minimize the data required to look through, the posts were filtered by ‘text posts’. As #thinspiration is such a visual hashtag, a lot of posts include only pictures. Since this study does not cover the multimodality of the posts, the posts only containing was therefore favourably removed from the search in order to minimize the amount of unwanted data that would have to be processed.

Corpora are often quite large in size, sometimes containing millions of words. However, necessary size of corpora is not clearly established, but rather ‘should be related to its eventual uses’ (Baker, 2006: 28). Since the text collected is specific and information dense, a smaller size of the corpora should be adequate. There have been earlier studies conducted on small corpora, such as Shalom (1997), cited in Baker (2006: 28) who created a corpus of shorter personal ads, whose corpus was estimated at ‘between 15,000 and 20,000 tokens’ (2006: 28). Since the posts collected are both short and specific in terms of intent, I have judged smaller corpus of approximately 15000 to 20000 tokens as being satisfactory in order to create two relevant corpora for this study in particular.

After retrieval of data, the #bopo corpus was comprised of 120 posts, and it clocked in with total of 19120 word tokens. The #thinspo corpus similarly consisted of 120 posts, with a total of 15734 word tokens. The data was then processed through the

aid of the concordance software AntConc, in order to find patterns and differences between and within the corpora.

3.2. Method

The data was analysed using AntConc to look at differences and similarities in linguistic expressions between the two corpora. The main tools used to find patterns in the corpora are frequency, clusters, concordance and keyness.

Frequency is a tool that measures the amount of times one or more words occur in a corpus. This is interesting for this study when looking at the occurrence of certain pronouns, especially when comparing the frequency in the two corpora.

When searching for *clusters* in corpora, it provides a quick and efficient way of finding the words that are most likely to occur before or after a specific word, in this study, clusters of the word 'fat' will be looked at in both corpora.

Keyness is a tool that allows for a direct comparison between two corpora, one as the 'main' corpus, and one as a 'reference' corpus. AntCont allows the comparison of the two corpora and presents a keyword list; words that occurs to a greater extent in main corpus but not in the reference corpus. This is interesting when looking at the differences of descriptions of the two corpora since it allows the researcher to quickly identify differences in word use between corpora. This type of keyness with a reference corpus roughly similar in size can also be found in Baker (2006).

Concordance is a tool that allows the researcher to retrieve a list of all the occurrences of a certain word in a corpus, and put them in context, showing a certain amount of words both before and after the specific word. It allows for a closer look at the search term in context to other words; showing the two or more words next to the word on the right or left side. What this does is show the relation between the words, often allowing for an overview that reveals certain common patterns in its collocates (Baker, 2006).

After retrieving information and general patterns of linguistic markers in the microblogging discourse, the data will be analysed as being types of fat talk. This will be conducted with the aid of Arroyo and Harwoods categorisation of fat talk, which was presented earlier, in the background section of the paper.

3.2.1 Methodological issues

One of the aspects that can make corpus analysis of the web hard to grasp is the issue of the multimodality on websites such as Tumblr and Instagram. Due to the fact that these websites allow or, as in the case with Instagram, require that the user to combine text and image in the same posts. In discussing methodological issues when working with corpus linguistics on the web, Bolander and Locher stated that '[s]cholars thus need to acknowledge the potentially multi-modal nature of their data and account for including or excluding its study in their research design' (Bolander, & Locher, 2014: 18).

This study will not focus on the multimodality of the posts, due to the nature of the study. Since corpora is a quantitative method, it would be irrelevant to focus on the imagery of the posts. For #thinspiration, the imagery serves as a motivator or a 'goal' image, whereas for #bopo the imagery serves as a way to show the diversity of body types to advocate diversity and body acceptance.

Since both #bopo and #thinspo are two quite visual hashtags that are used within the communities, the choice to disregard the imagery may be a risky move. Because a large amount of the posts are only pictures, on Tumblr, the posts have to be filtered as 'only text', if that wasn't the case, it would have been virtually impossible to collect all the data needed in time.

4. Results & discussion

This section will present the results; frequency, clusters and keyness first, then it will cover concordances of pronouns, and concordances with the word 'fat' from both corpora. Further, samples will be picked out of the text and analysed using the categories of fat talk presented by Arroyo and Harwood.

4.1. Frequency

In this section, the most frequent lexical words from each corpus will be presented in the two tables below, and possible interesting findings will then lead to further analysis throughout the results-section.

Table 1. Most frequent lexical words from the #thinspo corpus

Rank	Frequency	Word
11	203	Fat
36	80	Weight
46	61	People
52	55	Body
56	54	Skinny
61	51	Hate
66	45	Food
72	38	Stop
85	32	Time
87	31	Love

Table 2. Most frequent lexical words from the #bopo corpus

Rank	Frequency	Word
12	222	Fat
18	173	Body
38	87	People
44	73	Love
48	66	Weight
65	48	Beautiful
70	43	Bodies
83	35	Self
86	35	Size
89	33	Life

As seen in both table 1 and 2, the most frequent lexical word in both corpora is the word ‘fat’. Since this is the word that has been used to identify posts for retrieval, this is not a surprising find. That both corpora contain many body-oriented terms such as *weight*, *body*, *bodies*, *size*, *skinny* is also an expected result.

However, it becomes more interesting when looking at the differences between the two corpora. Beside the generally body-focused theme, the #thinspo corpus also also

use the feelings *love* and *hate*, with ‘hate’ being mentioned 51 times whereas ‘love’ was only mentioned 31 times, indicating that the corpus has some negative affect.

As seen in table 2, the #bopo corpus shows more positive affect, using terms such as *love*, 71 times and *beautiful* 48 times. The #bopo corpus also includes a number of body-oriented words such as *body*, *weight*, *bodies*, *size*. When comparing this to the #thinspo corpus, the words ‘body’ and ‘weight’ are included in both corpora, however, whereas #thinspo also include a specific type of body, i.e. ‘skinny’, the #bopo corpus include *size* and *bodies*, which are more neutral words for describing several different types of bodies.

4.2. Clusters

This section will focus on the clusters that occur along with the term ‘fat’ the most often in both corpora. The clusters searched for were clusters of 3-4 words, due to the larger span generating more results, and more interesting such. Clusters without lexical value that were incomprehensible were not included. Hence rank has been added to the tables to indicate how many of the nonsensical clusters were disregarded.

Table 3. Clusters for ‘fat’ in the #thinspo corpus

Left side			Right Side		
Rank	Freq.	Cluster	Rank	Freq.	Cluster
1	4	Fat and ugly	1	6	I’m fat
4	3	Fat and disgusting	4	4	You’re fat
7	2	Fat and gross	13	2	I am fat
9	2	Fat fucking pig			

Table 4. Clusters for ‘fat’ in the #bopo Corpus

Left side			Right Side		
Rank	Freq.	Cluster	Rank	Freq.	Cluster
1	5	Fat and beautiful	1	9	I am fat
3	2	Fat and thin	2	6	I’m fat
4	2	Fat as fuck	7	3	You’re fat

As seen in the clusters on the right side, in both tables 3 and 4, the corpora include fat as a descriptor of oneself (e.g. ‘I’m fat’, ‘I am fat’) as well as of others (e.g. ‘you’re fat’). It is interesting that both corpora have the same three phrases in the right side clusters, as they are common interpersonal comments and can be interpreted in a variety of different ways. In order to understand the right-side clusters more closely, some instances of these clusters in their context will be further investigated in the section that deals with concordances.

When looking at the left side clusters; the differences between the corpora become more prominent. In the #thinspo corpus, the clusters have clear negative affect; including terms as *ugly*, *disgusting*, *gross*, *fucking pig*. In the left side clusters of the #bopo corpus, the term ‘fat and thin’ is used as neutral descriptors (‘both fat and thin people can be happy and unhappy’) and ‘fat as fuck’ was used in the description of an event, in which ‘fat’ was used as an insult (‘I heard a girl say to her friend “she’s fat as fuck”’).

4.3. Keyness

The keyword list indicates what words are more commonly used in one corpus when compared to a different one. In this case, the #thinspo and #bopo corpora has been used to create two keyword lists. The top 10 keywords from each corpus are presented:

Table 5. Keyword list of #thinspo corpus with #bopo corpus as reference

Rank	Frequency	Keyness	Keyword
1	454	+ 61.6	you
2	956	+ 60.74	I
3	110	+ 58.63	want
4	58	+ 56.35	fucking
5	27	+ 42.97	im
6	24	+ 38.2	disgusting
7	57	+ 35.06	eat
8	51	+ 34.24	hate
9	17	+ 27.05	calories
10	21	+ 26.48	pig

The #thinspo corpus also include more terms that could be seen as emotionally loaded, such as *fucking*, *disgusting*, *hate*, *pig*. This, would be considered expressive, and emotionally loaded vocabulary, which Atanasova described as being linguistic features of negative affect (2017). It also indicates that the word *pig* is used significantly more than in the #bopo corpus. This is a finding which we will look at closer at under the section of animal metaphors.

Table 6. Keyword list of #bopo corpus with #thinspo corpus as reference.

Rank	Frequency	Keyness	Keyword
1	113	+ 75.96	we
2	43	+ 43.72	bodies
3	173	+ 43.57	body
4	41	+ 36.27	our
5	34	+ 28.59	us
6	257	+ 26.72	is
7	28	+ 26.53	women
8	134	+ 26.34	or
9	20	+ 24.03	positive
10	49	+ 21.08	their

When distinguishing words that are specific for a certain corpus, we can make out interesting differences between the two. Firstly, the differences between what pronoun is more popular in which corpus is interesting; it seems in table 6, that the #bopo corpus has a tendency to use the word ‘we’ more often than it is used in the table 5, the #thinspo corpus, where both ‘you’ and ‘I’ are in top two of the keywords. This will not be analysed any further in this section but rather will be covered in the next section of the results on pronouns.

The occurrence of ‘positive’ in the list of words that are more common is not a surprising find either, since many members of the community use the word ‘body positive’ to talk about body positivity and the movement. However, in the #bopo corpus, the words that are distinctly more common than in the #thinspo corpus are many

inclusionary terms such as *we*, *bodies*, *our*, *us*, *women*, which may further imply that the body positive community expresses a different type of we-talk than in the #thinspo corpus.

4.4. Concordances

Looking at concordances allow for more contextual information about a certain search term or phrase. In this section, we will look closer at the use of pronouns in the two corpora, as well as looking closer at how the clusters ‘I’m fat’, ‘I am fat’ and ‘you’re fat’ are used. By looking at these cases more closely, we will also hopefully be able to identify some different patterns of fat talk and how they are performed within the two communities.

4.4.1 Pronouns

As seen in previous section, the two corpora have shown a difference in pronoun usage. The #thinspo corpus has a tendency to opt for ‘you’ and ‘I’ whereas the #bopo corpus tends to opt for the pronoun ‘we’. This section will attempt to zoom in closer and find if and how the two groups create community through their pronoun use. Firstly, concordances for ‘you’, ‘I’, and ‘we’ will be compared, and the differences and similarities found in the concordances will be discussed further.

Table 7. Concordance for ‘you’ in #thinspo corpus

no.	
(1)	But maybe if <u>you</u> ACTUALLY tried. <u>You</u> ’d be happy. <u>You</u> won’t be happy if <u>you</u> aren’t skinny.
(2)	I’ll keep talking all day until <u>YOU</u> believe what I’M telling <u>you</u> . And that’s that <u>you</u> ’re a fat pig.
(3)	<u>You</u> feel worthless and that’s exactly what <u>you</u> are.
(4)	<u>You</u> are lazy and don’t deserve love until <u>you</u> are THIN and PRETTY.
(5)	Don’t be a quitter and don’t break your promises! <u>You</u> are in control!
(6)	Its your fault Nobody is force feeding <u>you</u> ! <u>You</u> ! <u>You</u> are the one who makes the choice!
(7)	<u>YOU</u> DON’T DESERVE THAT. Put the food down. Throw it away. <u>You</u> are a pig.

In total, ‘you’ occur 454 times in the #thinspo corpus.

In (1)-(7), the sentence structures are interesting to look at. They often include sentences of a declarative type. They also exhibit stronger emotion, in exclamatory sentences, followed by an exclamation point, as seen in (5) and (6).

Another type of sentence that can be seen throughout the #thinspo corpus, is the imperative sentence, commonly used in commands (e.g. Do the dishes! Close the window!). This type of sentence can be seen in (5): ‘Don’t be a quitter and don’t break your promises’, and (7): ‘Put the food down. Throw it away’.

These types of sentences, in this manner, could be seen as a type of motivational speech, that other’s wanting to lose weight can read and feel motivated to abstain from food, exercise more etc. According to Crandall’s ‘anti-fat attitudes measure’, as cited in Arroyo and Harwood, these types of *expressions of fear* (‘fear of fatness’) are often ‘grounded in the physical but also the social aspects of weight gain’ (2014: 184).

Table 8. Concordance for ‘you’ in #BOPO Corpus

no.	
(8)	<u>You</u> are beautiful just the way <u>you</u> are
(9)	It doesn’t really matter how others call <u>you</u> but what <u>you</u> call yourself
(10)	But I’m going to post them anyway 😊 fuck <u>you</u> , society. Fuck your beauty standards!
(11)	Whether it’s a stranger in the street or a family member who won’t stop criticizing <u>you</u> – STAND UP FOR YOUR BODY AND YOURSELF
(12)	Being unfit doesn’t make <u>you</u> any less worthy of respect.”
(13)	<u>You</u> do not need to measure up to someone else’s idea of body beautiful.
(14)	please know that <u>you</u> ’re not alone, that <u>you</u> deserve recovery and that <u>you</u> don’t have to be underweight
(15)	<u>You</u> ’re beautiful despite others who make <u>you</u> feel otherwise
(16)	Don’t let the world stop <u>you</u> from loving your body just ‘cause it doesn’t conform to society’s idea of beauty and healthy.
(17)	Diet culture tells <u>you</u> not to eat xyz because it’s “bad”
(18)	Fuck <u>you</u> ... <u>You</u> are not entitled! We don’t owe <u>you</u> shit! Looking at us doesn’t automatically mean <u>you</u> know our health, our history.

In total, ‘you’ occurs 314 times in the #BOPO corpus. When looking at sentence structures, one can see some similarities to the #thinspo corpus. A lot of the sentences

are simply declarative: (8), (9), (10), (12), (15) and (17), but then there are also the imperative sentences such as (11): ‘STAND UP FOR YOUR BODY AND YOURSELF’ and (16): ‘Don’t let the world stop you from loving your body’ that encourage the reader to love themselves.

The body positivity posts also show a slight tendency to refer to a general group of people, or society, as ‘you’. This can be observed in (18): ‘You are not entitled! We don’t owe you shit’ and (10) ‘fuck you, society. Fuck your beauty standards!’. These types of statements can be seen as ‘resistance’ of society’s ideals, as described by Thoits as enacting actions such as ‘challenging, confronting, or fighting a harmful force or influence’ (2011: 11). In these cases, the ‘harmful force’ would be society’s beauty ideals.

Conclusively, when looking at the differences of the authors of #bopo posts and #thinspo posts, is that they use the same type of method to achieve different results. While both groups seemingly aim to promote change of one’s own actions, #thinspo posts seems to encourage behaviours in order to change of oneself whereas #bopo posts urge the readers to rebel against ‘society’s idea of beauty and healthy’, as seen in (16). Tables 9 and 10 are of the concordances of ‘I’ in both corpora, as follows;

Table 9. Concordance for ‘I’ in #thinspo corpus

no.	
(19)	I want to lose weight because Ive always had low self-esteem
(20)	I don’t deserve to even have a blog like this because I’m so fat... I always let myself down or ruin my progress
(21)	I’m going to exercise everyday maybe multiple times a day. I can’t be fat anymore.
(22)	I’m actually overweight and its so shitty bc Its like I don’t even belong in the ED/anorexia/bulimia community
(23)	shit, shit! It means I put on weight! How could I get like this?! Why did you eat like a pig?
(24)	I am so worried!!! What If even at my ugw I look the same?? Fat and ugly!!!
(25)	I will NOT get any fucking fatter!!! I WILL be successful this time
(26)	I want to belong to someone. I want someone to like me. I want to be perfect.

In total, ‘I’ occurs 956 times in the #thinspo corpus. That frequency is high, keeping in mind that the total corpus is only 15734 words in total, indicative that pro-anorexia

discourse is quite focused on the individual. Moreover, the content is surely weight-loss oriented. More often than not, the posts include more negative affect such as emotionally loaded content connected to self-worth and body weight, as seen in (20): ‘I don’t deserve to even have a blog like this because I’m so fat...’ (emphasis added).

The author of the posts also often expressed negative affect in expressions of self-hate, or a wish to change themselves, as seen in (19), (24), (25), and (26). And the idea of losing weight is closely connected to some kind of success, or perfection, either seen in the disappointment of *not* losing weight, as in (20), (21), (23), (24).

One type of fat talk that is more common in the #bopo corpus is also *expression of fears*, such as in (24): ‘I am so worried!!! What If even at my ugw [Ultimate Goal Weight] I look the same?? Fat and ugly!!!’. In this instance, negative affect can not only be seen in the word choices (*worried, fat and ugly*), but also the increased use of exclamation points as a type of emotional expression of discourse.

Further, the expression of wanting to lose weight, and cheering each other on, can be seen as a type of *discussion of coping strategies* as the authors try to motivate each other and themselves to lose weight, and by doing so, attain a sense of achievement.

Table 10. Concordance for ‘I’ in #bopo Corpus

no.	
(26)	I worked way too hard to get to where I am mentally, I won’t ever go back.
(27)	I struggle with accepting my weight and being happy with what I see in the mirror and I know I am not alone.
(28)	I am not nearly as afraid of “having fat” as I am of NOT living this life of freedom
(29)	What I am is a woman in progress. I am strong, I am resilient.
(30)	I’m trying to love myself. I’m learning to love myself.
(31)	and you know what the best part is? I DIDN’T HATE MYSELF!
(32)	and I said to myself, “Fuck it. I’m already beautiful. I don’t need to torture myself.”

In total, ‘I’ occur 314 times in the #bopo corpus, which is about a third of how many times it was mentioned in the #thinspo corpus. When using first person pronouns, almost all posts are focused on some kind of change, similarly to in the #thinspo corpus. However, the changes are focused on a mental change, such as in (27): ‘I struggle with

accepting my weight and being happy’ (emphasis added), or 30: ‘I’m trying to love myself. I’m learning to love myself’. More often than not, the stories of change include more positive affect, as described by Sastre in her descriptions of linguistic markers of body positive discourse. Close to all posts in table 10 focus on a ‘journey’ of some sort, towards self-acceptance, where the struggles are clearly ‘framed around the catharsis engendered by a newfound positive relationship to one’s body’ (Sastre, 2014: 938). This type of changes are, similarly to what was found in the #thinspo corpus, also a type of discussion of coping strategies; only, the #bopo corpus want to cope by working on their self-acceptance whereas the #thinspo corpus are filled with samples of how they cope by trying to change their bodies instead.

The next part will cover the pronoun ‘we’ that only occurred 12 times in the #thinspo corpus. Only one out of those twelve were in reference to a community; ‘One step at a time, we’ll become lovely, thin dolls’. When relating that to the 314 times that ‘we’ occur in the #bopo corpus, it is already an indication that ‘we-talk’ is a more common type of fat talk within the body positivity community than we have found in the pro-anorexia community. Following is a table of some common concordances for ‘we’ in the body positivity corpus.

Table 11. Concordance for ‘we’ in #bopo Corpus

no.	
(33)	Let’s talk about that “bad word”, that F Word that <u>we</u> all fear: FAT
(34)	<u>We</u> are worthy of respect, love, and happiness RIGHT NOW! Not after losing 5, 15, 50 pounds.
(35)	I hope that someday in the near future <u>we</u> are no longer the “wrong kind of fat”
(36)	<u>We</u> spend so much time trying to minimize ourselves when <u>we</u> could focus on embracing ourselves
(37)	Say yes to self-love. The more love we have for ourselves the more love <u>we</u> can share
(38)	People my size often feel like <u>we</u> have to hide ourselves because <u>we</u> don’t fit neatly into the perfectly polished movement that <u>we</u> see on social media.
(39)	Women need to be built up, nor torn down. <u>We</u> need to respect each other, not degrade.

We-talk, on an intergroup level, is often a way for *self-identification*, or identify with a group, and to create solidarity for those within the group (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014).

In table 11, we can find several occurrences of the group aspect, both an inclusionary group; i.e. *all* women; as seen in the table above, such as in (39): ‘Women need to be built up, not torn down. We need to respect each other, not degrade’ (emphasis added).

However, it does also refer to specific groups such as in (38): ‘people my size often feel like we have to hide ourselves’ (emphasis added). In this sentence, the ‘we’ most likely refers to women that could be categorised as ‘fat’. Nevertheless, there is a clear aspect of community within the corpus: the posts are encouraging self-love, and self-acceptance, as well as providing affirmation.

4.4.2 ‘I’m fat’ / ‘You’re fat’

In section 4.2., it was found that the #thinspo and #bopo corpus had similar results of right side clusters for the term fat. Both sections had the three clusters ‘I’m fat’, ‘I am fat’ and ‘You’re fat’. By itself, the similarity does not tell us much about the difference in presentation styles of the two communities; therefore, in this section I will be looking more closely at the situational context of the clusters ‘I’m fat|I am fat’ and ‘you’re fat’ in the in the following tables.

Table 12. Concordance for ‘I’m fat|I am fat’ in #thinspo corpus

no.	
(40)	So much worse because she meant it. She thinks <u>I’m fat</u> and hearing it from her just hurt.
(41)	Like I hate myself I think <u>I’m fat</u> but I can’t be the only one who think a lot of this thinspo is way too thin
(42)	Everytime I say <u>I’m fat</u> he says I’m not
(43)	Maybe it’s because they think <u>I’m fat</u> .
(44)	I know that I could look at least moderately attractive if I was skinny, but <u>I’m fat</u> so I’m just fucking invisible
(45)	i told him no because <u>i am fat</u> and he replied with “you’re beautiful”

Examples (42) and (45) are instances of how ‘I’m fat’ can be used as a means of seeking approval (e.g. ‘you’re not’ or ‘you’re beautiful’). However, when now achieving the wanted response, as seen in (40): ‘She thinks I’m fat and hearing it from her just hurt.’, shows how the word ‘fat’ has so many negative attributes ascribed to it (as discussed earlier; illness, lack of control, etc.) that it is deemed a hurtful comment.

The #thinspo corpus also often draw the connection between fat and unattractiveness, as seen in (41), (44).

In addition to exhibiting a lot of *evaluations of self* in combination with *self-identifying* comments (i.e. I'm fat [self-identifying] + I'm bad [self-evaluating]) in a similar manner that will be found in the #bopo corpus, however, both evaluating and identifying comments tend to be negative in the #thinspo corpus.

Table 13. Concordance for 'you're fat in #thinspo corpus

no.	
(46)	Every person is looking at you – not because <u>you're fat</u> and disgusting, but because you're beautiful
(47)	before they floor it away and shout once more " <u>you're fat</u> "
(48)	Big tits and a big ass don't really matter if <u>you're fat</u> .
(49)	We know <u>you're fat</u> . You can't hide it from yourself so you obviously can't hide it from the world.
(50)	The pointless endless bingeing. No <u>you are fat</u> and gross. Put down that fucking chip

All posts exhibit features of negative affect. Even in (46) that also includes the positive word 'beautiful'. When looking more closely at more body of the text post, the post is only written as a 'make belief' - idea of how life will if the author or reader identified with the 'skinny' group rather than the fat one. This also shows how pro-anorexia exhibits more *expressions of fears* than what has been found in the #bopo corpus, specifically, the fear of gaining weight.

Other than that case, the pattern for 'you're fat' follow the same patterns of 'I'm fat', which is that fat is a word that is associated with negative personal traits and unattractiveness.

Table 14. Concordance for ‘I’m fat’ or ‘I am fat’ in #bopo corpus

no.	
(51)	These two are not mutually exclusive. <u>I am fat</u> AND beautiful
(52)	Sure, I know <u>I am Fat</u> but I do my best to stay healthy
(53)	Maybe <u>I am fat</u> but why do you care?
(54)	I am tired of feeling less worthy of attention because <u>I am fat</u>
(55)	I am not offended by being called fat. <u>I AM fat</u> . I am more offended that people would lie.
(56)	Just because <u>I’m fat</u> doesn’t mean I’m not beautiful or sexy
(57)	Does looking fat make me unlovable? If I know <u>I’m fat</u> , why am I trying so hard to hide it?

In the #bopo patterns for ‘I’m fat’ or ‘I am fat’, there is a general tendency to *self-evaluate* and *self-identify* with positive effect, as seen in (51), (56). In these samples, there are also a type of resistance, in that the authors ‘refus[e] to yield to the penetration of a harmful voice or influence’ (Thoits, 2011:11). The ‘harmful voice or influence’ in this case is the societal ideals that are reproduced through fat talk, such as in table 13. The connection of ‘fat’ and negative traits such as ‘ugly’ and the resistance is seen in the refusal to accept this general statement.

In (52): ‘I am Fat but I do try my best to stay healthy’, is an instance of trying to ‘justify’ oneself (Arroyo, & Harwood, 2014). Because being ‘overweight’ is such a stigma in a society that believes that fatness is unhealthy or even coined as being a medical condition (Saguy, & Almeling, 2008), in some instances, people that do not fit the stereotype of ‘health’ (i.e. slim) may feel the need to defend themselves.

Table 15. Concordance for ‘you are fat’ in #bopo corpus

no.	
(57)	You are beautiful just the way you are. Understand? Just. The. Way. You. Are. If <u>you’re fat</u> . If you’re thin. If you’re somewhere in between.
(58)	Your body is valid. It’s okay to gain weight if <u>you’re fat</u> . No matter your size
(59)	Stretch marks aren’t ugly they don’t mean <u>you’re fat</u> almost EVERYONE has them somewhere
(60)	If doesn’t matter if <u>you are fat</u> , skinny, dark skinned, have scars

The most common type of fat talk in the #bopo corpus is affirmative talk on an intergroup level. When looking at the cluster ‘you are fat’, one can see that it, more often than not, is preceded by the word ‘if’. Often, these terms serve as affirmation for the other part, in providing approval of the other persons bodies.

4.4.3 Animal metaphors

In section 4.3., on keyness, table 5 showed how the word ‘pig’ occurred 21 times more in the #thinspo corpus than in the #BOPO Corpus. In the #BOPO Corpus, the word ‘pig’ only occurs once, as the cluster ‘pig out’ when referring to eating a lot of food at once. Whereas, in the #thinspo corpus, the word ‘pig’ is used as a negative descriptor.

The frequent use of the word ‘pig’ within the #thinspo corpus is interesting due to the implied traits of the animal. Pig is named as being one of the more offensive and dehumanizing terms when used by and for women, implying ‘low conscientiousness’ and ‘depravity’. The study further claims that the word pig ‘as metaphors [...] imply that a person is repulsive and morally depraved’ (Haslam, Loughnan, & Sun, 2011, p. 322). When looking at the concordance for the word ‘pig’ in the #thinspo corpus, several occurrences show a general pattern between the animal likeness of ‘pig’ and lack of willpower or self-control, as following:

Table 16. Concordances for ‘pig’ in #thinspo corpus

no.	
(61)	How could someone love you when all you are is a fat <u>pig</u> ? You’re disgusting. Drink water and restrict its not that hard dumbass.
(62)	You look like a pig. A fat <u>pig</u> stuffing her face because she’s a fatass that she eats anything her eyes rest on for even a moment. You’re disgusting. You’ll never get that body you want if you keep doing this.
(63)	Stomach: okay you’re right, you’re a fat bitch but I’ll keep talking all day until YOU believe what I’M telling you. And that’s that you’re a fat <u>pig</u> .
(64)	Go ahead. Binge. Eat more than 1000 calories a day. See how far that fucking gets you. You’ll never be happy. You’ll always be upset that you’re a fat, disgusting <u>pig</u> .
(65)	Why did you eat like a <u>pig</u> ? Now you are even fatter & need to love even more weight than before. Why can’t you ever just DO the right thing?!....

When this term is used within the #thinspo corpus, often combined with the word ‘fat’, it implies a lack of self-control. Since restriction is a generally accepted means of correctional behavior, insufficient weight loss (or weight gain) would therefore imply a lack of self-control, or low conscientiousness. This agrees with the general tendency amongst #thinspo accounts and their general tendency to use ‘fat pig’ as a metaphor for themselves in an uncontrolled state.

This also resonates with the claim that stating ‘I’m so fat’ is not necessarily directly connected to one’s body fat but, as Nichter claims, it can also be used as a general statement for expressing general anxiety or loss of control (Nichter, 2000).

Concluding remarks

Contrary to what previous research has found, the strong community aspect of pro-anorexia community that has been previously described by Juarascio, Shoaib, and Timko (2010) and De Choudhury (2014), which often exhibited *we-talk* in one way or another, seems to be virtually non-existent. Bearing in mind that the replies or responses to the authors of the collected posts were not included in the corpus, and therefore it is possible that the authors do, in fact, get their support in another type of discourse. Either in the form of comments or private messages to one another due to the restriction of triggering content on the website.

This study has shown that there are differences in how fat talk is performed between the two communities. The body positive movement seems to focus more on *we-talk*, as well as positive self-affirmations and speaking more about their relations to their own bodies and their ‘journey to self-love’, in a similar way that has previously been found in studies of obesity-blogs (Atanasova, 2017), however, this type of find in a specifically body-positive forum without the weight-loss aspect has not been previously been studied. In the pro-ana community the focus seems to lie more on evaluation of self, self-identifying with a group and displaying a lot of negative affect through negative terminology as well as emotional speech. Posts also exhibit a stronger connection between external physical changes and a person’s achievement and/or success.

The intergroup aspect of fat talk in body positivity seems to primarily function as a community and support within the group; however, contrasted to the #thinspo corpus,

body positive posts often provided *validation*; both within group (e.g. “You are worthy of love.”) and also on an interpersonal level (e.g. “I’m feeling bad about my body today but that is OK too”). Whereas, in the pro-anorexia community, the ‘support’ that is provided seems to be mainly negative self-evaluation (‘I’) and evaluation of others (‘you’) in order to motivate each other.

Conclusively, in this study I have uncovered that the pro-anorexia community on Tumblr and body positive community on Instagram share a lot of linguistic similarities; both encourage change in one way or another. The main difference seems to lay in the aspiration; whereas the pro-anorexia community encourages conforming to the societal ideals of how a body should look like, through starvation or dieting, the body positive community does the opposite by encouraging a resistance of societal ideals as well as and cheering self-love.

While it has been found that body-positivity share linguistic markers with weight-loss oriented online communities, such as performing fat-talk according to the categories defined by Arroyo and Harwood, the group does not show exhibit close to as much negative affection when compared to pro-anorexia posts. The body-positivity community therefore can be concluded to differ from previously linguistically studied weight-loss communities in that it does not have the inherent aspect of wanting to change one’s own body.

Since the discourse of body positivity has barely been previously studied, future research would certainly benefit from any studies concerning the body positive, and how fat talk within body positive communities differs from traditional fat talk.

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