

## Impact case study (REF3)

<b>Institution:</b> University of Reading		
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
<b>Title of case study:</b> Changing attitudes towards hate speech in Italy and Europe		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken:</b> 2009 - 2020		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Federico Faloppa	Lecturer Associate professor	1 October 2008 – present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred:</b> 2014 - 2020		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014?</b> N		
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b>  “Hate speech” – offline and online – is a global issue that is widely debated. Finding ways to combat hate speech and form counter-narratives against it has been identified by the Council of Europe as a priority for education, communication and policy. Federico Faloppa is an established expert on hate speech, both through his research and as a public commentator and advisor. In the past decade he has informed public debate in Italy through his contributions in national media and over 130 public talks and workshops; trained media professionals and NGOs’ activists, inspired a play and an anti-racist communication campaign and informed the policies and practices of non-academic stakeholders. Faloppa has changed attitudes and behaviour relating to hate speech in Italy and beyond. Through collaborations with a range of organisations, in particular Amnesty International Italy and the Council of Europe, Faloppa is influencing the changing attitudes towards hate speech.</p>		
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b>  Faloppa’s research has set the tone in Italy for the debate on the linguistic representation of “otherness” in language across the centuries, and the everyday use of derogatory expressions towards minorities. Faloppa’s research has explored the way language can stigmatise people, not just from an historical point of view but in current narratives and discourses. This has included studying events from the 1990s and early 2000s, looking at representations of foreigners and migrants in the popular media (output 1).</p> <p>Faloppa was Co-investigator in the Leverhulme Trust-funded International Network “Destination Italy. Representing migration in contemporary media and narrative” (2010-2012), on the discourse of migration in literature, cinema and the media, leading the strand on the media. He co-edited the project’s publication (output 2) including his own chapter “Media and migration: some linguistic reflections”, on the portrayal of migrants by the Italian media, in which he suggests linguistic inaccuracies led to negative framing of migrants.</p> <p>In 2017, Faloppa was a Co-investigator on the ESRC-funded project “ProLanguage – The role of language in global migration and mobility”. This project involved academic institutions and NGOs from seven different countries and brought Faloppa and colleagues to refugee settings in Greece, Italy and Lebanon, to investigate how language-teaching was provided in camps. As a continuation of this project, and to work on counter narratives and alternative narratives on migration, in 2018 Faloppa started a research project supported by the Centre for Literacy and Multilingualism at the University of Reading to explore the use of languages in “Borderscapes” across Europe. As a result, Faloppa curated a photographic exhibition of the work of Luca Prestia, exhibited in Reading Public Library in 2018 and subsequently in five public locations in Italy. The exhibition catalogue was published in 2019 (output 3) and has been developed further for a co-authored monograph <i>Oltre il confine. Da Ventimiglia a Lesbo, scatti, parole e segni dalle frontiere d’Europa</i> (output 4).</p>		

Faloppa has produced a number of popular publications based on his research, to help reach as wide an audience as possible. He was invited to contribute to *Contro il razzismo. Quattro ragionamenti* (output 5) published in 2016 by Einaudi and translated into Spanish, which is now used as a textbook in many university courses in Italy.

Faloppa's most recent monograph (output 4) is the pinnacle of his research on hate speech, and currently is the most comprehensive publication on this subject available in Italian. For this reason, has received extensive media coverage since its release. This body of research is fundamental to Faloppa's training methods and has contributed to his significant public profile in Italy as a leading academic on linguistic manifestations of racism and hate speech. In July 2020 Faloppa was awarded a University of Reading GCRF grant worth 48,000 GBP to develop a project for combatting hate speech in Bosnia Herzegovina.

### 3. References to the research

The research meets or exceeds the threshold for 2\*: it has been published in peer-reviewed volumes with established academic presses. Outputs 1, 5 and 6 are important points of reference and regularly feature as key readings on numerous university courses on history of Italian language, Italian sociolinguistics, and anthropology and migration studies. Output 6 is the primary point of reference on "racism in language" available in Italian and output 1 is an essential point of reference on hate speech available in Italian, serving as a catalyst for new thinking and policies on hate speech.

1. Faloppa, F. (2011) *Razzisti a parole (per tacer dei fatti)*. Il nocciolo, 64. Laterza, Rome, pp144. ISBN 9788842096214
2. Faloppa, F. (2015) *Media and migration: some linguistic reflections*. In: Bond, E., Bonsaver, G. and Faloppa, F. (eds.) *Destination Italy: representing migration in contemporary media and narrative*. Peter Lang, Oxford, pp. 105-124. ISBN 9783034309615
3. Faloppa, F. (2019) *Beyond the border. Segni di passaggi attraverso i confini d'Europa*. In: Prestia, L. and Faloppa, F. (eds.) *Beyond the border. Segni di passaggi attraverso i confini d'Europa*. Fondazione Nuto Revelli, Cuneo, Italy, pp. 12-29. ISBN 9788890292439
4. Faloppa, F. (2020) *Odio: Manuale di resistenza contro la violenza delle parole*. UTET, Turin, pp. 1-280. ISBN 978-88-511-8041-6.
5. Faloppa, F. (2016) *Per un linguaggio non razzista*. In: Aime, M. (ed.) *Contro il razzismo. Quattro ragionamenti*. Giulio Einaudi Editore, Turin, pp. 69-123. ISBN 9788806229535

### 4. Details of the impact

Faloppa has played a significant role in raising awareness in Italy of endemic hate speech and the origin, use and persistence of everyday racist language. He has trained journalists, teachers and representatives from trade unions and NGOs – whose work can influence language use at grass roots level – to change their perceptions of language. This has helped them understand the historic precedents for why their language is biased, if not racist. As a well-known expert engaged in combating hate speech in Italy, Faloppa was invited to be a leading figure in Amnesty International Italy's and "Alexander Langer" Foundation's strategies against hate speech, bringing about change in attitude and understanding within these organisations and in the public sphere (E1).

#### A. Grass-roots training for behaviour and attitudinal change.

Faloppa's initial target group for training was journalists, focussing on the representation of minorities and foreigners across the press and media. Since 2014, he has worked with the professional association "Carta di Roma", which trains journalists as part of continuous professional development. Through this collaboration, Faloppa has reached approximately 500 journalists and media professionals (2017-2019), many of whom have commented that it has made them reconsider their use of language. Key to these changes is that Faloppa at no point has proposed to censor their language, just to take a more considered approach to why they are using the language they choose (E2).

Together with Dr William Allen (COMPAS – Oxford) Faloppa has brought this training model to the UK as part of an ESRC IAA grant “Media Use and Representation Among Migrants: Developing a New Agenda” (2019). A workshop to discuss the media consumed by refugees living in the Oxford and Reading areas and involving local NGOs and journalists, was held in March 2019. This helped identify how refugees might be reached most effectively so they could help create their own counter narratives. Unfortunately, follow-up events planned for 2020 were cancelled due to Covid-19.

In the past ten years, the training sessions have been delivered to NGOs including 1) NAGA Milan (2013), 2) Carta di Roma (2014-ongoing), 3) Fondazione “Alexander Langer” Stiftung (2016-ongoing), 4) Amnesty International Italy (2017-ongoing), 5) COSPE Onlus Florence (2018-ongoing), 6) Emergency (2019). In all cases, Faloppa has helped the organisations create and support training for their own members, clients and civil servants and informed their internal policies and strategic planning (E1-4).

### **B. Organisational involvement for behavioural and attitudinal change:**

Faloppa’s research is recognised internationally and he has become a principal player in several organisations, as they aim to deal with issues of race, language and migration in the media. He has worked with the Alexander Langer Foundation in Bozen, serving on its scientific committee since 2017, and he was nominated Deputy President of the Foundation in 2018, in recognition of his contribution to combating hate speech in the media. His work has made a significant impact on the Foundation’s programmes and priorities (E3).

Since 2017, Faloppa’s research on “racism in language” and hate speech offline and online has been embedded in Amnesty International Italy’s practices and activities and has informed all Amnesty-badged training activities. Faloppa’s collaboration with Amnesty International Italy has stemmed from his training activities and has been a significant avenue for bringing about attitudinal and behavioural change (E4). The two main training events that sparked the collaboration were the design and delivery of CPD workshops for journalists in Palermo on 22 April 2017 (100 participants) and Catania on 13 March 2018 (150 participants). Following this, Faloppa was invited to deliver a keynote talk at Amnesty Italy’s AGM in Caserta on 21 April 2018 (to 400 delegates). In 2018, Faloppa was invited by Amnesty Italy to become a consultant to support their work, initially from October-December 2018. This included setting up and co-ordinating a national network of thirty experts on hate speech and counter narratives, including representatives from research centres, universities, organisations, and NGOs, seven national meetings chaired as national coordinator so far (E4).

Under the umbrella of Amnesty Italy, Faloppa has continued to deliver a series of training courses, workshops and talks including trainings for Amnesty activists involved in the project “Task force hate speech” (Rome 2018-2020, approximately 100 activists); workshops for activists at Amnesty summer camps (Lampedusa 2018 and Camini 2020, approximately 100 participants); CPDs for lawyers (Florence 2018, 150 participants; Verona 2019, 100 participants); public talks at Amnesty local branches (Milan and Ravenna 2019, approximately 150 participants each session); Three master classes for the HE certificate in “Migration and reception of migrants” at the prestigious ISPI – Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale (Milan, March 2019, 30 selected students; November 2019, 25 selected students; March 2020, 25 selected students) and a training session for Amnesty’s officers from Emilia Romagna and Tuscany (Piacenza 2019, 80 participants) (E5).

In March-June 2019, Faloppa contributed to design a monitoring activity, involving 200 activists, on the presence of hate speech in the European Election campaign, and testing and evaluating the IT platforms and apps designed for the survey. He then wrote a report to summarise Amnesty’s monitoring activities since 2018, “Un anno di odio. Dalle politiche del 2018 alle europee del 2019” (“A year of hatred. From general elections in 2018 to European elections in 2019”), published in Amnesty International Italy, “Il barometro dell’odio – Elezioni Europee”, July 2019). In 2019, Faloppa also wrote the introductory paper “Il linguaggio dell’odio. Continuità e innovazioni” (“The

language of hatred: continuity and innovation”) for Amnesty’s 2019 monitoring activity, “Il barometro dell’odio – Sessismo da tastiera” (April 2020).

Faloppa’s impact on Amnesty Italy itself has been to influence and set the organization’s agenda on hate speech and discrimination through language. As a result, and “in recognition of the high impact” of his research and given his “national and international esteem”, the Director of Amnesty Italy has invited Faloppa to lead a new “Centre of excellence” on hate speech (to be launched in 2021) and of the “[Rete nazionale di contrasto ai discorsi e ai fenomeni d’odio](#)”, which was launched on 14 July 2020 (E1, E6). These roles include: coordinating twenty-five organizations and several individual researchers and activists across Italy; establishing a research agenda; coordinating research, educational and impact activities and providing Amnesty’s campaign office with input for innovative communication campaigns based on research. The influence reaches beyond the organisation itself, with an audience of a) 2,000 Amnesty activists; b) 70,000 members of the organisation; c) local communities and stakeholders; d) the wider public in Italy and beyond, through Amnesty’s press office. The Rete nazionale is establishing itself as the most authoritative research and campaigning hub on hate speech and counter-narratives nationwide and will liaise with Amnesty branches worldwide with the purpose of setting up and spreading best practice for the whole organisation across the globe. In June 2020 Faloppa renewed his consultancy contract with Amnesty, to push forward the Rete nazionale and provide Amnesty with original research on hate speech and discourse of exclusion post Covid-19, which will contribute to the organisation’s campaigning aims in 2021 (E7).

In recognition of his expertise and influence, in 2018 Faloppa was appointed by COSPE Onlus as the European evaluator of the project Silence Hate funded by the European Union’s Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme, involving COSPE, European federation of Journalists (EFJ), Media Diversity Institute (MDI), Amnesty International Italy, Amnesty International Poland, KARPOS, Zaffiria, Cyprus Community Media Centre (CCMC), and IKME- Socio-political Studies Institute (E8).

He has since been appointed as one of six independent experts to the new Committee of Experts on Combatting Hate Speech (ADI/MSI-DIS) at the Council of Europe – the most authoritative institutional committee in Europe on hate speech and related subjects. As a member of this committee, he plays a crucial role in making recommendations to members states on a comprehensive approach to addressing hate speech within a human rights and anti-discrimination framework (E9, E10). As a result of his work for the Committee, he has been contracted as a regional expert for Albania by the Anti-Discrimination Directorate at the Council of Europe.

Faloppa’s research is transforming our understanding of the use of hate speech at a transnational level, through his appointment as an expert to various international organisations, including Amnesty Italy and the Council of Europe, and through the training he has provided to grassroots organisations and NGOs. His research has directly impacted how hate speech is perceived and brought about changes in attitudes and understanding within these organisations and beyond.

#### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [E1] Letter of appointment to the leadership role in the new “Centre of excellence”, by the Director of Amnesty Italy, (April 2019).
- [E2] Statement from the President of the Association “Carta di Roma”, (June 2020).
- [E3] Statement from the President of the Fondazione “Alexander Langer” Stiftung (July 2020).
- [E4] Letter from the Country Director of Amnesty, (November 2020).
- [E5] Sample of feedback generated from Faloppa’s training sessions.
- [E6] Rete nazionale di contrasto ai discorsi e ai fenomeni d’odio website and press conference: <https://www.retecontrolodio.org/il-coordinamento/> , <https://www.facebook.com/Retecontrolodio.org/videos/311056323271711/> and [https://www.facebook.com/Retecontrolodio.org/?notif\\_id=1607594287658755&notif\\_t=page\\_tag&ref=notif](https://www.facebook.com/Retecontrolodio.org/?notif_id=1607594287658755&notif_t=page_tag&ref=notif)

- [E7]** Minutes of the Rete nazionale di contrasto ai discorsi e ai fenomeni d'odio (July – December 2020).
- [E8]** Statement from COSPE's Programme Coordinator (May 2020).
- [E9]** Email of appointment as an Independent Expert to the Committee of Experts on Combatting Hate Speech (ADI/MSI-DIS) of the Council of Europe (April 2020).
- [E10]** Committee of Experts on Combatting Hate Speech (ADI/MSI-DIS) of the Council of Europe website (September – December 2020).