Chapter 5

Discourse, power and access

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DIMENSIONS OF DOMINANCE

One of the crucial tasks of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is to account for the relationships between discourse and social power. More specifically, such an analysis should describe and explain how power abuse is enacted, reproduced or legitimised by the text and talk of dominant groups or institutions. Within the framework of such an account of discursively mediated dominance and inequality this chapter focuses on an important dimension of such dominance, that is, patterns of *access* to discourse.

A critical analysis of properties of access to public discourse and communication presupposes insight into more general political, sociocultural and economic aspects of dominance. This chapter merely gives a succinct summary of this broader conceptual framework. Leaving acide a detailed discussion of numerous philosophical and theoretical complexities, the major presuppositions of this framework are, for example, the following (see, e.g., Clegg, 1989; Lukes, 1974; 1986; Wrong, 1979):

1 Power is a property of relations between social groups, institutions or organisations. Hence, only *social power,* and not individual power, is considered here.
2 Social power is defined in terms of the *control* exercised by one group or organisation (or its members) over the *actions* and/or the *minds* of (the members of) another group, thus limiting the freedom of action of the others, or influencing their knowledge, attitudes or ideologies.
3 Power of a specific group or institution may be `distributed', and may be restricted to a specific social *domain* or *scope,* such as that of politics, the media, law and order, education or corporate business, thus resulting in different 'centres' of power and elite groups that control such centres.
4 *Dominance* is here understood as a form of social power *abuse,* that is, as a legally or morally illegitimate exercise of control over others in one's own interests, often resulting in social inequality.

5 Power is *based* on privileged access to valued social resources, such as wealth, jobs, status, or indeed, a preferential access to public discourse and communication.

6 Social power and dominance are often *organised* and *institutionalised,* so as to allow more effective control, and to enable routine forms of power reproduction.

7 Dominance is seldom absolute; it is often *gradual,* and may be met by more or less *resistance* or counter-power by dominated groups.

For the discussion in this chapter, it is important to stress one element in these short definitions of power and dominance, that is, the relevance of the *cognitive* dimension of control. Power abuse not only involves the abuse of force, for example in police aggression against black youths, and may result not merely in limiting the freedom of action of a specific group, but also and more crucially may affect the *minds* of people. That is, through special access to, and control over the mean of public discourse and communication, dominant groups or institutions may influence the structures of text and talk in such a way that, as a result, the knowledge, attitudes, norms, values and ideologies of recipients are – more or less indirectly affected in the interest of the dominant group.

Much 'modem' power in democratic societies is persuasive and manipulative rather than coercive (using of force), or incentive, such as the explicit issuing of commands, orders, threats or economic sanctions. Obviously, discourse plays a crucial role in thus `manufacturing the consent' of others (Herman and Chomsky, 1988). It is therefore an important task of CDA to also study the precise cognitive structures and strategies involved in these processes affecting the *social cognitions* of groups (for details on social cognition, see e.g. Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Generally speaking, what is involved here, is the manipulation of *mental models* of social events through the use of specific discourse structures, such as thematic structures, headlines, style, rhetorical figures, semantic strategies, and so on (for details, see van Dijk, 1990; van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983). Unless the readers or listeners have access to alternative information, or mental resources to oppose such persuasive messages, the result of such manipulation may be the formation of *preferred models* of specific situations (e.g., of a `ʸace riot'), which may in turn be generalised to more general, preferred knowledge, attitudes or ideologies (e.g. about blacks, or about youths).

DISCOURSE AND ACCESS

One major element in the discursive reproduction of power and dominance is the very *access* to discourse and communicative events. In this respect discourse is similar to other valued social resources that forra the basis of

power and to which there is unequally distributed access. For instance, not everyone has equal access to the media or to medical, legal, political, bureaucratic or scholarly text and talk. That is, we need to explore the implications of the complex question *Who may speak or write to whom, about what, when, and in what context,* or *Who may participate in such communicative events in various recipient roles,* for instance as addressees, audience, bystanders and overhearers. Access may even be analysed in terms of the topics or referents of discourse, that is, who is written or spoken *about.* We may assume, as for other social resources, that *more* access according to there several participant roles, corresponds with *more* social power. In other words, measures of discourse access may be rather faithful indicators of the power of social groups and their members.

Patterns and strategies of discursive access may be spelled out for virtually all social domains, institutions, professions, situations and genres. Thus, in the *political* realm, only ministers have active access to Cabinet meetings, and only parfiamentarians to parliamentary debates. Secretaries or clerks may have passive access to Cabinet meetings, that is, only in their roles as people who take notes or carry out orders; they speak only when invited to do so. In public sessions of parliaments, members of the public may have passive access, but only as listeners (or rather, as 'overhearers'). Similar patterns of access exist also in *business corporations,* for board meetings or in boss–employee interaction.

In *education,* teachers usually control communicative events, distribute speaking tucos, and otherwise have special access to, and hence control over educational discourse. On the other hand, students have in principie access to talk in classrooms only when talked to and invited to speak. In some cases, also in other domains, such limited access may be voluntary, in others it may be obligatory, for example, when students must answer exam questions, when citizens are ordered to speak in hearings, defendants in police interrogations or when in court. Similarly, in *medical* encounters, doctors may control many parts of the conversations with their clients, such as the setting (time, place and circumstances, e.g. after `appointment' only), topics (medical problems only) and style.

Most obvious and consequential are the patterns of access to the mass *media:* who has preferential access to joumalists, who will be interviewed, quoted and described in news reports, and whose opinions will thus be able to influence the public? That is, through access to the mass media, dominant groups also may have access to, and hence partial control over the public at large. Except for letters to the editor, the public generally has passive media access only as readers or viewers.

Finally, in everyday *conversations,* there may be culturally different patterns of access based on age, gender, class, education or other criteria that define dominance and discrimination: women may have less access than men, blacks less than whites, young people less than adults.

Thus, for each social domain, profession, organisation or situation, we may sketch a discursive and communicative *schema of conditions and strategies of access* for the various social groups involved: indeed, who may say/write what, how, to whom in what circumstances?

ANALYSING PATTERNS OF ACCESS

The examples informally discussed show different pattems of access, depending on various social or institutional roles, gender, age, position, context or topicality. In order to examine such conditions and strategies of access more explicitly, a number of analytical distinctions need to be made. Although it is a relevant concept in the study of discourse and power, 'access' is a rather vague notion, and therefore needs further specification. It may involve the way people take the initiative for communicative events, the modalities of their participation, as well as the ways they control the various other properties of discourse, such as turra taking, sequencing, topics, or even the ways they are being represented, as referente or topics, in discourse. Let us briefly discuss some of these dimensions of access.

Planning

Paneras of discourse access already begin with taking the initiative, the preparation or the *planning* of a communicative event. Thus a chairperson may 'call' a meeting, a judge may issue a warrant to appear in court, and a professor may decide to hold an exam. Such plans will usually imply decisions about the setting (time, place) and an 'agenda' for talk, as well as the participants being invited or ordered to appear. For medical or educational encounters, patients or students may take the initiative, but doctors and professors usually decide about the setting. Such is also the case for most service encounters, such as with bureaucratic agencies. In media encounters, the relative position and power of news actors and joumalists usually determines who, may access whom: who has access to a press conference or who `gives' an interview.

Setting

There are many elements of the setting of communicative events that may be controlled by different participants. First of all, who is allowed or obliged to participate, and in what role, may be decided by the chairperson or by other powerful participants who control the interaction. We have already seen that time, place and circumstances of text and talk may similarly be controlled by powerful actors. Also other circumstances, such as distance, positioning and the presence of `props of power' (the bench

and the robes of a judge, the uniform of police officers, or the `head' of the table for chairs), may involve differential patterns of access for different participants.

Controlling communicative events

The crucial form of access consists of the power to control various dimensions of speech and talk itself: which mode of communication may/must be used (spoken, written), which language may/must be used by whom (dominant or standard language, a dialect, etc.), which genres of discourse are allowed, which types of speech acts, or who may begin or interrupt turns at talk or discursive sequences. Besides these overall constraints, participants may have differential access to topics, style or rhetoric. Thus, defendants in court may be required to speak the standard language, to answer questions only (and only when required to speak), to speak only about the topic being discussed, and using a polite, deferential style. Similar constraints may exist for subordinates in business companies or students in school. That is, virtually all levels and dimensions of text and talk may have obligatory, optional or preferential access for different participants, for example, as a function of their institutional or social power. Or rather, such power and dominance may be enacted, confirmed and reproduced by such differential patterns of access to various forms of discourse in different social situations. Thus, having access to the speech act of a command presupposes as well as enacts and confirms the social power of the speaker.

Scope and audience control

For dialogues such as formal meetings, sessions or debates, initiators or participants may allow or require specific participants to be present (or absent), or to allow or require these others to listen and/or to speak. Beyond the control of content or style, thus, speakers may also control audiences. That is, discourse access, especially in public forms of discourse, also and most crucially implies audience access. At public meetings or through the mass media, discourses and their speakers or authors may thus have a greater or lesser power scope. Full access to a major newspaper or television network thus also implies access to a large audience: obviously, access to the *New York Times* or CBS signaLs more power than access to a local newspaper or local radio station. The same is true for writers, teachers, professors or politicians and the relative sizes of their audiences.

   Although the scope of access, in terms of the size of the audience of one's discourse, is an important criterion of power, control is much more effective if the minds of the audience can also be successfully `accessed'.

When speakers are able to influence the mental models, knowledge, attitudes and eventually even the ideologies of recipients, they may indirectly control their future actions. That is, mentally mediated control of the actions of others is the ultimate form of power, especially when the audience is hardly aware of such control, as is the case in manipulation. Indeed, most forms of discursive and communicative access we discussed abo^{y}e, such as control of setting, interaction, topic or style will be geared towards the control of the minds of participants, recipients or the audience at large, in such a way that the resulting mental changes are those preferred by those in power, and generally in their interest.

Synthesising criterio of access

After this discussion of the various types of access, we are now able to spell out – for each type of discourse or communicative event, and for each social group or institution – the various access pattems that establish one of the relationships between discourse and social power. For a court trial, for instance, we might specify the following schema of access, in terms of who control(s) what aspect of such a trial, as informally discussed abo^{y}e (the schema is not complete; for conversational details, see e.g. Atkinson and Drew, 1979; for style, see Erickson *et aL,* 1978; O'Barr, 1982; for access to specific genes, Wodak, 1985; note also that all variation and control is limited by the overall socio-cultural constraints of the legal context and the speech situation).

Initiative: judge
Setting (time, place, participants): judge, prosecutor, barristers
Communicative event
    Participants: judge (e.g. judge may exclude prosecution witnesses)
    Turn allocation and distribution: judge
    Sequencing (e.g. opening and closing the session): judge
    Speech acts:
        Verdict, sentencing, commands, requests, questions, assertions: judge
        Verdict: jury (e.g. in British and US legal systems)
        Indictment, accusations, questions, assertions: prosecutor
        Defence, requests, questions, assertions: defence counsel
        Assertions (as answers to questions): defendant, witnesses
Topic(s): judge, prosecutor, defence counsel
Style: judge
Recording: clerks
Audience/scope: immediate: usually small; mass mediated: large.
Result: possibly serious for defendant (loss of money, freedom, or life).

Conversely, we may examine the power of social groups or professions, such as judges, by analysing their range and patterns of access (as judges), and we see that they control most properties of the court trial. However, since (important) trials are often routinely covered by the media, judges also have relatively easy media access as described aboᵛe, although such access is not total: judges may not control what exactly is written or said about them (Anderson *et al.,* 1988; Chibnall, 1977; Graber, 1980; Hariman, 1990). Although the normal access range and scope of judges is only the legal domain, that is legal discourse in general (e.g. when writing a verdict), and trials in particular, judges may also have access to education and research when giving lectures or writing textbooks, or to politics or finance when they are appointed as members of committees or boards because of their legal expertise or influence. In sum, judges appear to have a medium range of access, corresponding to their relative power. However, since they are, in principie, the only ones who decide about freedom or even about life and death, the consequences of their otherwise moderate power may be tremendous. This is, of course, especially the case for judges of courts of appeal and Supreme Courts, which may even have the last word in deciding on major socio-political issues affecting a whole nation, such as abortion or civil rights. That is, beyond the scope and the range of their discourse access, the power of judges should especially also be measured by the personal, social and political consequences of such access. Indeed, in the legal domain, their discourse may *be* law.

Similar analyses may be made, each for their own domain of power, for more or less powerful presidents, Cabinet ministers, members of parliament or congress, popes and priests, chief executive officers, professors, newspaper editors or union leaders, among others, but also, at lower levels of the power hierarchy, for `ordinary' citizens, bureaucrats, pollee officers, teachers or shopkeepers. It is our contention that there should generally be a rather close interdependence between power (and hence access to valued social resources), on the one hand, and access to – control over – the conditions, structural properties and consequences of discourse, on the other hand. In other words, if discourse access is a measure of power, Critical Discourse Analysis becomes an important diagnostic tool for the assessment of social and political dominance.

DISCOURSE, POWER AND RACISM

To further illustrate the analysis of discursive social power and access pattems presented aboᵛe, let us finally examine in somewhat more detail some of the ways social power is being enacted, legitimised and reproduced in one major domain of dominance, that by white (European) groups over ethnic or racial minorities, refugees or other immigrants.

Empirical data that form the backdrop of this discussion are derived from our extensive research project on discourse and racism, carried out at the University of Amsterdam since 1980 (van Dijk, 1984; 1987; 1991; 1993a). The various discourses studied for this project were everyday conversations, high school textbooks, news reports in the press, parliamentary debates, scientific discourse, and corporate discourse, among others.

The aim of our discussion here is only to show how ethnic-racial dominance, or racism, is also reproduced through differential patterns of discourse access for majority and minority groups, and not only because of differential access to residence, jobs, housing, education or welfare. This dominance may take two forms: the discursive reproduction of ethnic prejudice and racism within the dominant white group itself, on the one hand, and forms of everyday racism in talk between majority and minority members (e.g. slurs, impoliteness, unfounded accusations), on the other hand (Essed, 1991).

One strategy of such dominant discourse is to persuasively define the ethnic status quo as 'natural', lust', 'inevitable' or even as `democratic', for instance through denials of discrimination or racism, or by de-racialising inequality through redefmitions in terms of class, cultural difference or the special (unique, temporary) consequences of immigrant status. The persuasive or manipulatory success of such dominant discourse is partly due to the patterns of access of such text and talk. That is, most power elites are themselves white, and their power implies preferential access to the means of mass communication, political decision-making discourse, the discourses of the bureaucracy, and the legal system. That is, relative to minority groups, dominance is duplicated: it is the white group as a whole that has special privileges and access to social resources, including the symbolic resources of communication, whereas the white power elites additionally control the white group at large, by their persuasive influence on the mental conditions (stereotypes, prejudices, ideologies) of the discriminatory practices of white group members.

The opposite is true for ethnic minority groups, whose subordination is further exacerbated by their (generally) lower class position. That is, their lack of access is not merely defined in terms of racial or ethnic exclusion, but also by their class-dependent lack of access to good education, status, employment or capital, shared with poor whites. The exclusion and marginalisation that result from limited socio-economic and symbolic (discursive, communicative) access hardly need to be spelled out (for details, see Essed, 1991; Jaynes and Williams, 1989). Thus, minorities or immigrants generan)/ have less or no access to the following crucial communicative contexts, as analysed aboye:

1 Government and legislative discourses of decision-making, information, persuasion and legitimation, especially at the nationallstate levels.

2 Bureaucratic discourses of higher level policy-making and policy imple-
  mentation.
3 Mass media discourse of major news media.
4 Scholarly or scientific discourse.
5 Corporate discourse.

Politics

Especially in Europe, virtually no minority group members are members
of national governments, and only very few are members of the legis-
lature (for the UK, see Solomos, 1989). In some countries, such as the
Netherlands, some minorities that do not have Dutch nationality, but
have been residents for five years, have active and passive access to local
elections, and thus have a (minimal) voice in city councils, a small
`privilege' fiercely opposed in, say, France and Germany. Due to the size
of ethnic minority groups in the USA, there is at least some political
representation of minorities and hence access to political decision-making,
especially at the local level, for example in cities with a large minority
population (Ben-Tovim *et al.,* 1986; Jaynes and Williams, 1989; Marable,
1985). Since most 'ethnic' policies, however, are national or federal,
minorities are more or less effectively excluded from more influential text
and talk about their own position. On the other hand, minorities are
frequent topics of political talk and text, but this forro of passive access
is hardly controlled by them: they have virtually no influence on this
`representation' in political discourse (van Dijk, 1993a).

Media

The access of minorities to the mass media is a critical condition for their
participation in the public definition of their situation. Despite the gener-
ally liberal self-definitions of many joumalists, lack of media access
by minorities is one of the most conspicuous properties of the symbolic
dominance of white elites (Hujanen, 1984; Mazingo, 1988; *Minority
Participation in the Media,* 1983; Wilson and Gutiérrez, 1985). In Europe,
there are virtually no minority joumalists, least of all in controlling
editorial positions. Major quality newspapers may have just one or two
token minorities, often in non-tenured contract or freelance positions. Even
in the USA, 51 per cent of the newspapers have no minority joumalists,
and promotions to higher positions are notoriously problematic. Television
has limited access only for some (very `moderate') visible token minorities.
As a result, the newsroom staff are virtually wholly white, and this will of
course have serious consequences for news production, writing style, source
access and general perspective of news discourse or television programmes

(Hartmann and Husband, 1974; Martindale, 1986; Smitherman-Donaldson and van Dijk, 1988; van Dijk, 1991).

Moreover, due to their limited social and economic power, minority groups and organisations also lack the usual forms of organised media access, such as press conferences, press releases and public relations departments (Fedler, 1973). Conversely, most white journalists are known to routinely prefer (white) institutional sources (Tuchman, 1978), and generally find minorities less credible, especially when these are providing critical opinions about dominant white elites. Communication problems and differences of style between white journalists and minority sources may further limit minority access to the media (Kochman, 1981).

Differential access of majority elites and minorities to the media predictably results in differential access to the structures of news reports as well. Selection and prominence of news *issues* and *topics* are those stereotypical and negative ones preferred by the white political, corporate, social or scholarly elites and their institutions. Thus, the frequent issue of immigration will be primarily defined as an invasion and as essentially problematic, and seldom as a welcome contribution to the economy or the culture of the country. Crime, drugs, violence and cultural deviance are other preferred issues of 'ethnic' news coverage. Conversely, due to limited minority access to the definition of the situation, issues and topics that are directly relevant for minorities are less covered or made less prominent. This is the case for issues such as discrimination, racism, police brutality, shortage of jobs, miserable working conditions, the failures of minority education, and so on, especially when the white elites are to blame for the situation. On the other hand, the actions of white elites that are defined as `positive' for minorities are usually covered prominently. As in the coverage of North–South relations, `our' helping `them' is a very newsworthy topic. Thus, news topic selection and prominence is a direct function of the differential access, interests and perspectives of majority and minority news actors.

Similarly, lack of access to journalists also predicts that minority speakers will be less *quoted* than white majority speakers, as is indeed the case (van Dijk, 1991). If they are quoted at all, then either moderate spokespersons will be quoted who share the opinions or perspective of the majority, or radicals or extremists will be quoted in order to facilitate ridicule or attack (Downing, 1980). Minorities are especially quoted on 'soft' and less `risky' topics, such as religion, the arts, folklore, or culture more generally (Hartmann and Husband, 1974; Johnson, 1987; van Dijk, 1991). Also, unlike majority group speakers, minorities are seldom allowed to speak alone. Their accusations of the host society and its elites, when quoted at all, *never* go unchallenged.

Similar observations may be made for all properties and levels of news reports. *Headline* content and syntactic structure systematically favour `us'

and problematise `them', as is also the case for lexical *style (e.g.* `riots' instead of `disturbances'), *rhetoric,* disclaimers and other strategic semantic *moves* (`We have nothing against Turks, but ...'; `We are a tolerant society, but . . .'), as well as other discursive properties. Thus, on the whole, `their' negative actions are made more prominent (e.g. by topicalisation, first page coverage, headlining, rhetorical emphasis), whereas `our' negative actions are de-emphasised by denials, euphemism, mitigation or other strategies for avoiding negative self-presentation (van Dijk, 1991; 1992). Because of a lack of alternative information sources about ethnic relations, the effects of such daily reporting of the models and attitudes of many white readers are predictable: widespread prejudice and xenophobia. Thus, minorities and their representatives have little access to the general public, unless by protests and disruptive behaviour that will precisely be defined as a confirmation of prevailing stereotypes and prejudices.

Academia

Rather similar remarks may be made about patterns of access to educational and scholarly discourse (for details, see van Dijk, 1993a). Minorities, especially in Europe, generally have little access to universities, and even less to the active control of scholarly discourse, even in 'ethnic' studies about them. In the Netherlands, for instance, more than 95 per cent of all `ethnic' research is carried out by white Dutch researchers, and even more is under white Dutch supervision. Ethnic studies departments, if any, are usually largely white. The topics of such 'ethnic' research are surprisingly similar to those in the mass media: cultural difference and deviance, crime, educational problems, etc. With the usual delays, high school textbooks typically reproduce prevailing scholarly stereotypes about minorities. Not surprisingly, the media will in turn pay special attention to those research results that nicely fit the prevailing stereotypes, such as about youth gangs, drugs, crime or the cultural problems of young iminigrant wornen.

Critical issues, such as discrimination and especially racism, are as little studied as they are covered in the press. Moreover, the few studies of these issues tend to be ignored, denied, marginalised and attacked as `unscientific' or 'political' scholarship (Essed, 1987).

Thus, ethnic groups, and even their scholarly elites, have virtually no access to, let alone control over, the ways the ethnic situation is defined in the social sciences. Since much of dais research is also used as a source for national policies (and for media accounts), we see how dominant white elites jointly collude in preventing access to the hegemonic basis of power, that of knowledge and beliefs and the manufacture of the consensus. It needs no further argument that curricula, scholarly joumaLs, conferences, and other vehicles of scholarly discourse are also usually dominated

by white scholars, except for small `niches' of `black' joumals that have virtually no influence on the scholarly establishment in the social sciences as a whole. The hype, especially in the USA, about what is defined as `political correctness' in academia reflects an overreaction of dominant white elites against minor and local cultural shifts and minority resistance, rather than a fundamental change in prevailing academic discourse and access pattems (Aufderheide, 1992; Berman, 1992).

Business

Corporate discourse is usually less public, and hence only indirectly involved in manufacturing consent. However, it is ultimately vastly influential through its consequences for the socio-economic implications of the ethnic status quo. If corporate discourse explains high minority unemployment especially in terms that blame the victim (language deficiencies, lack of skills, lower education, failing work ethos, etc.), this discourse will also have easy access to the press and to political decision-making (Fernandez, 1981; Jenkins, 1986; van Dijk, 1993a). Managerial talk about affirmative action and other forms of social responsibility may be associated with many negative properties, such as loss of competition, social unfaimess, and so on. Also this feature of prominent corporate discourse, especially in Europe, will indirectly become public, for instante through politicians or joumalists repeating or emphasising this point of view.

   Few minority group members have leading managerial positions, and when they do, they make sure not to speak too radically about the claims or complaints of their own group, unless they want to lose their jobs. Thus, minorities have very little influence on dominant corporate discourse. That is, they are unable to successfully challenge the ideologies that underlie discrimination and marginalisation of minorities in employment, business and finance in the first place. On the contrary, blaming the victim is a major strategy of white elite dominante, also in corporate discourse: charges of discrimination will be reversed by accusing minorities (especially blacks) of causing their own predicament, as noted aboye.

SOME EXAMPLES

After the more theoretical analysis of the relations between discourse, power and access, and the review of access pattems for discourse on ethnic relations, let us finally discuss some concrete examples. These will be taken from the coverage of ethnic affairs in the British press, during the first six months of 1989. Many reports during these months dealt with the Salman Rushdie affair, and — as usual in the press — with 'illegal' immi-gration.

Example 1

Thus the *Sun* begins one of its articles (23 January 1989) on immigration as follows:

GET LOST, SPONGERS

By Victor Chapple

A BLITZ on illegal immigration is being launched by the Government.

The number of staff dealing with foreign spongers will be more than **DOUBLED** and **TOUGH** new curbs are planned against bogus overseas students.

Key targets will be phoney colleges which enrol youngsters, but provide no courses.

When immigration officers raided one in East London last year, they found that 990 of the 1000 `students' had no right to be m Britain. Home secretary Douglas Hurd is considering law changes to stop foreign visitors switching to student status while here.

The huge (23 x 3cm) banner headline of this article represents the evaluative comment of the *Sun* on the plan of the govemment. The same is true for the use of `bogus' and `phoney', when describing students and colleges. These evaluative terms are not likely to be those used by the British government or Home Secretary Mr Douglas Hurd. It is at this point that the power, the autonomy and hence the responsibility of the newspaper are obvious: they could hardly blame the `politicians' for the racist language they use to influence the readers. In terms of our analysis of patterns of access, the style of reporting is accessible only to the reporter (Victor Chapple) or the editors of the *Sun,* and so is the persuasive effect such negative other-presentation may have on the minds of the readers. The direct contribution to the confirmation of well-known ethnic prejudices in the UK, that is, of immigrants as `spongers', is thus within the scope of the responsibility of the tabloid.

At the same time, however, we need to emphasise the `collusion' between the press elites on the one hand, and the political elites on the other. After all, the policies and political actions written *about are* those of the British authorities: they will do anything to reduce what they define as `illegal' immigration. The tabloid does not merely report such actions, however, but supports them, and even fabricates their reasons (students will be expelled because they are `spongers'). Thus, in many ways, the right-wing press supports conservative immigration policies, while at the same time framing them in a popular rhetorical style (`get lost', `spongers', `phoney', etc.) that makes such policies seem to respond to popular demand and resentment against immigration, thereby legitimising them.

Besides the direct access of the newsmakers to the style (size, lexicalisation, etc.) of the headlines and the style of the rest of the article, we also witness some degree of access of a prominent politician, that of the Home Secretary, whose picture is reproduced, whose actions are covered (positively) and whose future policies are mentioned. In the rest of the article, not quoted here, about a Sri Lankan refugee, Mr Viraj Mendis (described as an `activist') – who had sought refuge in a church but was arrested in a police raid and expelled after many years of residence in the UK – Douglas Hurd is also quoted, as is a Tory Member of Parliament (MP), both protesting against the action of churches in hiding refugees. The churches have no access to the press here: no spokespersons are quoted. Viraj Mendis, in a separate small article, is quoted as wanting to `expose the racism of the British government', and a picture of him is also shown. However, the framing of *his* words is dramatically different from that of Hurd. He is portrayed, in the text, as `sip[ping] mineral water in an exclusive club in Colombo', which implies that someone who is in such a situation can hardly be a serious refugee, and hence not a credible speaker. The very fact that he accuses the British government of racism is so preposterous for the *Sun* that such an accusation hardly needs further discrediting of Mendis, as the tabloid had done during the whole Mendis affair (for a more detailed analysis of right-wing reporting in the UK on the Viraj Mendis case, see van Dijk, 1993b).

In sum, we find several modes of access here. First, access of media elites: tabloid reporters and editors themselves, who chose the topic as being newsworthy, and control its style and rhetoric, layout, photos, and who thus also have direct and persuasive access to the `minds' of the readers.

Second, access of political elites: Mr Hurd as main actor has access to the topic, the quotations and the visual images of a tabloid read by about 5 million British readers.

Third, access of other politicians: access of a Tory MP, supporting Mr Hurd (or rather being critical of him for not having acted fast enough) and hence also sustaining the negative evaluation of the *Sun.*

Fourth, access of a refugee: passive access of Viraj Mendis to a secondary topic of this article (and to the main topic of a related short story), to quotation and photographs, but embedded in a negative framework so as to invalidate his credibility.

Example 2

The next example is also taken from the *Sun,* and was published a few days later (2 February 1989):

BRITAIN INVADED BY AN ARMY OF ILLEGALS

SUN **News Special**

By John Kay and Alison Bowyer

Britain is being swamped by a tide of alega' immigrants so desperate for a job that they will work for a pittance in our restaurants, cafes and nightclubs.

Immigration officers are being overwhelmed with work. Last year, 2,191 'illegals' were being nabbed and sent back home. But there are tens of thousands more, slaving behind bars, cleaning hotel rooms and working in kitchens....

Illegals sneak in by:

- **DECEIVING** immigration officers when they are quizzed at airports.
- **DISAPPEARING** after their entry visas run out.
- **FORGING** work permits and other documents.
- **RUNNING** away from immigrant detention centres.

We again find the familiar picture of a huge banner headline, featuring three major negative expressions, usually associated with immigrants and refugees: Invaded', 'array', and `illegals'. This style of describing undocumented immigrants is fully under the control (and access) of the *Sun* joumalists, with the probable consequences for the access to the public mirad, as described abo$^y$e. Note the special semantic implications and associations of the use of `invasion' and `arrny', which explicitly relates immigration with violence and threats to 'Britain': Immigration is War.

Since this is a 'News Special', the responsibility seems to be even more that of the tabloid: they do not report a news event, such as a political action, as is the case in the previous example, but they bring a 'report' based on their own journalistic `investigations'. The 'facts' thus constructed by the tabloid are as familiar as their metaphorical style, by which refugees and other immigrants are routinely compared to a `tide' that `swamps' the country. The term `swamped' is familiar. It was also used by Margaret Thatcher before she was elected prime minister, when she said that she feared that Britain would be `rather swamped' by people of an alien culture. Hence, the metaphors, though under full access and control of the journalists, are as such hardly new, and belong to the stock in trade of racist conservatives speaking about immigration. Obviously, as is the case with the use of `invaded' and 'array', being `swamped' by a 'tide' of `illegals' is just as threatening for the (white) British population, which is the primary audience for such style. The rest of the article shows the same style, for example when the police actions are called a 'baffle to hunt down the furtive workforce'. This is indeed what it is: a war to keep Britain white.

Immigration officers also have (passive, topical) access to this article, and

are duly pitied as being `overwhelmed' by the task. No harsh word will be found in the *Sun* about the ways that immigration officers accompfish their task of `tracking' down `illegals'. Note though that there seems to be a suggestion of commiseration with the immigrants as well, as may be inferred from the use of `working for a pittance' and `slaving'. At the same time, the style of the rest of the article does not seem to confirm this journalistic mood in favour of the immigrants. Rather `working for a pittance' also implies that since immigrants will do any job for any wage, they compete with white British workers. Thus, such a representation supports the familiar racist conclusion: `They take away our jobs!' Indeed, nowhere is it stressed in the article that most white British no longer want such work.

The next fragment, emphasised by bold capitals and attention-seeking 'bullets', summarises the various forms of deviance, violation and crime attributed to immigrants: they are liars and frauds. The rest of the article is similar (they do not pay taxes, etc.), but also focuses on the businesses that are being `raided' by the police. However, the focus of illegality is *not* on employers, businesses and all those others who exploit immigrants and pay sub-standard wages. Indeed, the headline of the article is *not* BRITAIN THREATENED BY A GANG OF IMMIGRANT-EXPLOITING BUSINESSES. Even the use of the passive voice in the syntax of the sentences hides those who do illegal hiring: `They [immigration officials] ended up taking away **THIRTEEN** Nigerians, all employed illegally', of which the last clause hides the agent of ilegal hiring.

As for the relations of power and access involved, we first of all find the reporters (and possibly the editors) of the *Sun* again responsible for the selection of the topic of this 'special report', for its style and the focus on certain dimensions (immigrants as threat and criminals) and not on others (employers engaging in illegal hiring and exploiting minorities). That is, the media elites have exclusive and active access to, and control over a large part of this text, and such is also their responsibility in manipulating the minds of the readers: the 'facts' of immigration are not to be blamed (as the reporters would undoubtedly say), but the journalistic ways of fabricating, representing and persuasively formulating such 'facts'.

At the same time, other news actors are involved and have various measures of access. Positively represented, as could be expected, are the immigration officers (in ethnic reporting in the right-wing press, the officers of law and order are *always* presented positively, as the guardians of Britain, who valiantly struggle in the racial war). One of them is also introduced in a later quote which tells the readers that he doesn't know how many illegals there are (apparently, the *Sun* does know) but that the officials are stepping up `their efforts to track them down'. Employers, we have seen, are stylistically absent: their businesses may be raided, but they are literally out of the picture; only 'ilegal' (that is immigrants, not managers) are found there. Yet, at the end, and in a small separate article,

some bosses may talk; however, they affirm that they hire only legal immigrants (from the EU), a claim that is not presented as at all doubtful by the *Sun.* Not a single negative word about employers is found in this article, despite the fact that the 'ilegal' immigrants are working for a pittance. On the contrary, they are represented as victims, who are sometimes `tricked by false credentials'.

In sum, also throughout this special report, 'we' or `our' people (officials, business, Britain), are consequently represented in a positive way, and `they' in a very negative way, as an invading army or as a swamping tide, people who, in the *Sun's* words, must be `nabbed' and `carted off' by the immigration officials.

We see that patterns of access (who is written about, who is allowed to speak, who may address whom, and who may use what style, etc.) are closely related to modes of self- and other-presentation in public discourse on ethnic affairs. Access to the press, through access to the journalists, also presupposes group-membership: those who belong to will have more access, especially the elites, but at the same time, they will also be represented more positively. The inverse is true for `them'. Indeed, not a single 'illegal immigrant' is quoted in this 'special report': their views, experiences, backgrounds are irrelevant. With a foreign army, that is, the enemy, one does not talk: one 'hunts them down' and 'calas them off.

Other examples

Many similar examples may be given: in the tabloid press most reporting has the same overall structures and strategies of access to selection, topicality, style and quotation, along the familiar US–THEM schema of racist representations. For the right-wing tabloids, this also means that `them' immigrants are associated with `them' of the loony left', another familiar target of tabloid attacks, as in the first of the following banner headlines and text fragments:

LEP"1'IES HAND £20,000 TO ILLEGAL IMMIGRANT

(Sun, 6 February 1989)

BE BRITISH, HURD TELLS IMMIGRANTS

A DIRECT warning to Britain's 750,000 Moslems will be issued by Home Secretary Douglas Hurd today.
He will tell them they must learn to live with British laws and customs – particularly for the sake of their children. The alternative would be growing public anger and resentment and renewed social conflict.

(Daily Mail, 24 February 1989)

NO RACIALISM IN TORY PARTY, SAYS THATCHER

(Daily Telegraph, 23 June 1989)

Thus, immigrants and the left share the familiar accusations of `fraud' exposed by the tabloids, as in the first headline. Indeed, `ratepayers' money', as is often stressed, is thus presented as `squandered' by loony left councils or programmes, a topic obviously popular with many tabloid readers.

In the second example, Home Secretary Hurd, responsible for immigration and ethnic relations, appears again, this time with a full account of a speech he *will* give (some news is not about the past, but about the near future), and which is worth an immense headline in 3 cm high capitals. That is, after the Rushdie affair, Muslims have become fair game both for patemalistic, if not threatening, political action, as well as for the press (and not only the right-wing tabloids), which associates *all* Muslims with the radical fundamentalists among them. If cultural autonomy was occasionally an official policy of western governments, the words now being spoken by Hurd and emphasised by the *Mail* leave no doubt about the real, assimilationist goals of ethnic relation policies: adapt to us, or get out. Worse, as is the case in much tabloid reporting and editorials, as soon as immigrants or minorities are represented as violating the law (as in `riots') or trespassing the norms of cultural adaptation, popular `resentment' (or even the fascists) are made to appear as a threat. Ironically, if not cynically, we need to realise that this resentment is created and fed by the tabloids themselves. Similarly, the threat of 'racial conflict' is not attributed to white racists, but to immigrants themselves, a familiar move of strategic reversal in the attribution of responsibilities.

The third example speaks for itself. As prime minister, Margaret Thatcher obviously had most privileged access to the media, thus being allowed to define the ethnic situation, and thus, of course, to deny racism (while at the same time using the familiar conservative mitigation `racialismg. Notice, that if (well-founded) accusations of racism are reported at all, the conservative press will routinely use the distance- or doubt-implying term 'claim' (for details, see van Dijk, 1991). Not so when Thatcher 'flatly denies', during a parliamentary debate, that there is no racism in the Conservative party, a claim met with derision from the Labour benches, here represented, however, as less credible than Thatcher. Indeed, the denial of racism is one of the hallmarks of elite racism (see van Dijk, 1993c).

Again we find the familiar pattems of access: Hurd, *as* a conservative politician, and by castigating Muslims, has acople access to the tabloid, its topic selection, its headline, and quote, and so has Thatcher. The immigrants and Muslims have passive access (as topics), but *they* do not control their representation, and their spokespersons are not quoted, unless it is a radical fundamentalist who will gladly oblige by confinning the prejudices of the reporter about the threat posed by Muslims and Arabs.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions of this chapter may be brief. Within the framework of a critical analysis of discourses, the study of the reproduction of power and dominance through discourse is a primary objective. One element in this reproduction process is the structures and strategies of 'access': who controls the preparation, the participants, the goals, the language, the gene, the speech acts, the topics, the schemata (e.g. headlines, quotes), the style, and the rhetoric, among other text features, of communicative events. That is, who can/may/must say what, to whom, how, in what circumstances and with what effects on the recipients?

Among the resources that forro the power base of dominant groups, also the preferential access to public discourse is an increasingly important asset, because it allows access to the control mechanisms of the public mind. In modern societies, discourse access is a primary condition for the manufacture of consent, and therefore the most effective way to exercise power and dominance.

Our brief analysis of some examples from the British press shows how the tabloids, conservative politicians and the forces of law and order have preferential access to the public definition of immigration and minorities, as well as to their derogation as criminals, frauds, invading armies, and radical assassins, among many other other-descriptions of `them', while at the same time presenting 'lis' as tolerant, tough and valiant, if not as victims. That is, the power of preferential access to the media is intimately related to the power of dominant groups to define the ethnic situation, and to contribute to the reproduction of racism, that is, the power of the white group.

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