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# Opinions and Ideologies in the Press

## 1 Aims

Editorials and op-ed articles in the press are generally expected to express opinions. (Op-ed articles are opinion pieces published on the page opposite the editorials.) Depending on the type and the stance of the newspaper, these opinions may vary considerably in their ideological presuppositions. This rather common formulation seems to imply that the ideologies of journalists somehow influence their opinions, which in turn influence the discourse structures of the opinion articles. Within the framework of a larger project on discourse ideology, this chapter examines some of the theoretical properties of these complex relations between ideology, opinions and media discourse. For instance, we need to spell out what exactly we mean by 'ideology' here, what the nature is of the common-sense notion of an 'opinion', and by what discourse structures they may be expressed.

At one level of analysis, opinions and ideologies involve beliefs or mental representations, and our approach therefore first takes a

*cognitive* perspective. On the other hand, the ideologies and opinions of newspapers are usually not personal, but *social, institutional* or *political*. This requires an account in terms of social or societal structures. In fact, we integrate both approaches into one *sociocognitive* theory that deals with shared social representations and their acquisition and uses in social contexts. And finally, since we examine in particular the sometimes subtle textual expressions of ideologically based opinions, this sociocognitive orientation will be embedded in a discourse analytical framework (for details, see van Dijk, 1995).

This approach is unique in rejecting the theoretical reduction that characterizes virtually all past and contemporary approaches to ideology. As is the case for language and knowledge, ideologies too are very complex social phenomena, which require independent conceptual analysis and empirical description at various theoretical levels. Thus, recognizing that ideologies are socially shared and used by groups and their members does not mean that they therefore cannot and should not *also* be described in cognitive terms. In that respect, ideologies are like knowledge and natural language (or rather like the grammars and discursive rule systems that underlie language use). Hence, our distinction between the mental and the social is a theoretical and analytical one, made to account for different dimensions of ideology.

Thus, in line with contemporary cognitive science, beliefs and ideological belief systems need to be accounted for *also, though not exclusively*, in terms of mental representations and eventually in terms of the neurobiological structures of the brain. This by no means implies a reduction to individualist, dualist or mentalist positions. On the contrary, what we are after is to show precisely how elements of societal structure (such as groups, institutions, power or inequality), as well as the everyday social practices of discourse and other forms of interaction among people as group members, are systematically related to the socially constructed dimensions of their minds.

For us, then, the *mirad* is both a common-sense and a theoretical concept. It is no less (and no more) 'real' or 'material' than equally =observable societal structures and social practices. The latter are no more 'all in the *mirad*' than ideologies and other beliefs are all in interaction or discourse. In our view, only Integrated sociocognitive

theories are able to explain in detail how social ideologies 'monitor' the everyday practices of social actors like journalists, and conversely how ideologies are formed and changed through the everyday interaction and discourse of members in societal contexts of group relations and institutions like the press.

Our examples will be taken from opinion articles in the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, which may be taken to express a variety of more or less liberal and more or less conservative opinions and ideologies, depending on the issues at hand, while at the same time probably exhibiting fragments of an overall 'American' ideological perspective on news events and the world.

## 2 Ideologies

The concept of 'ideology' is one of the most elusive notions in the social sciences, and this chapter will not even try to summarize the long theoretical debate about this notion (see, among many other books, Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), 1978; Eagleton, 1991; Larrain, 1979; Thompson, 1984, 1990).

Rather, it is the aim of this chapter to make a further step in the (slow) development of a new theory of ideology aiming to replace the hitherto rather vague notions of ideology in philosophy and the social sciences. This new theory has three main components:

- A Social functions.** A theory of the functions of ideologies for groups or institutions within societal structure. This theory answers the simple question of why people develop and *use* ideologies in the first place.
- B Cognitive structures.** Within this framework, a theory is developed about the mental nature and the internal components and structures of ideologies, as well as their relations to other cognitive structures or social representations, such as socially shared values, norms, attitudes, opinions, and knowledge, on the one hand, and personal and contextual models (experiences, intentions, plans etc.), on the other hand. This theory answers the question of what ideologies look like, and how they monitor social practices.

*C Discursive expression and reproduction.* A theory of the ways ideologies are expressed in, and acquired and reproduced by, the structures of socially situated text and talk. This theory is a special case of a broader theory of the ways ideologies are expressed and reproduced by social practices in general.

### *Social functions*

Since the social functions of ideologies have been amply discussed in the classical literature, we shall be very brief about them. Contrary to the conventional view, however, we do not limit ideologies to their role in the reproduction and legitimation of class domination. To begin with, dominated groups also need ideologies, for example as a basis for resistance. This means, secondly, that ideologies in general are not wrong or right, but rather more or less effective in promoting the interests of a group. Thirdly, we shall assume therefore that the main social function of ideologies is the *coordination* of the social practices of group members for the effective realization of the goals of a social group, and the protection of its interests. This applies both to group-internal social practices as well as to interaction with members of other groups. Given this general function of ideologies, it is of course true that many ideologies

develop precisely in order to sustain, legitimate or manage group conflicts, as well as relationships of power and dominance.

### *Cognitive structures*

In order for ideologies to effectively sustain such social functions, their cognitive content, structures and strategies should somehow be tailored to these social functions. In other words, what people *do* as group members should reflect what they *think* as group members, and vice versa, a relation studied in terms of 'social cognition' (Fiske and Taylor, 1991). Thus, social practices presuppose vast amounts of sociocultural and group-specific beliefs or social representations, such as knowledge, attitudes, norms, values and ideologies.

Our theory proposes that ideologies are the 'axiomatic' basis of the mental representations shared by the members of a social group. That is, they represent the basic principles that govern social

judgement - what group members think is right or wrong, true or false.

What do such ideologies look like? Despite the vast literature on ideologies, we do not know. But we may speculate about the typical contents and in particular the structure of ideologies. For instance, many group ideologies involve the representation of Self and Others, Us and Them. Many therefore seem to be *polarized* - *We are Good and They are Bad* - especially when conflicting interests are involved.

Such basic propositions of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation may influence the myriad of opinions and attitudes We have about Them in more specific social domains. Racist ideologies featuring such axiomatic propositions may thus co-ordinate prejudiced social group attitudes about minorities or immigrants, for instance in matters of immigration, residence, employment or education. In other words, the main cognitive function of ideologies is to organize specific group attitudes. This does not mean that ideologies as well as ideologically based attitudes are consistent, although in another sense they may well be coherent in relation to the basic interests of the group.

More generally, we propose that ideologies reflect the basic criteria that constitute the social identity and define the interests of a group. That is, ideologies may be represented as group self-schemata, featuring such categories as *Membership* ('Who belongs to our group? Who may be admitted?'), *Activities* ('What do we do?'), *Goals* ('Why do we do this?'), *Values* ('How should we do this?'), *Position* ('Where are we? What are our relations to other groups?') and *Resources* ('What do we have, and what do we not have?'). Because these schemata are ideological, the way groups and their members represent themselves and others may of course be biased', when seen from the point of view of others (including our point of view as analysts).

For journalists as a group, these ideological categories will feature basic information about who is recognized as a journalist (e.g. through holding a diploma or licence), what journalists typically do (e.g. write news and editorials), their goals (e.g. to inform the public, to serve as a 'watchdog of society'), their values and norms (e.g. truth, reliability, fairness), their position with respect to their readers or the authorities, and their typical group resource (information).

Ideologies and other social representations of the mind are 'social' because they are socially shared. As is the case for grammar and other forms of knowledge, socially shared representations should be seen as general and abstract. As a practical criterion, we may say that all representations that are routinely presupposed in discourse and other social practices are socially shared. Of course, throughout socialization, individual members may acquire slightly variable 'versions' of these social representations. Some members (e.g. the ideologues of a group) may have a more detailed and complete ideological system than others (see the discussion in Lau and Sears, 1986). This is the *first* source of individual variation in the enactment of ideologically based social practices, but it does not therefore mean (as is sometimes argued) that ideologies do not exist, any more than that grammars, discourse rules or sociocultural knowledge can be said not to exist because some members have more knowledge than others. In other words, as suggested before, the analysis of ideologies should take place at the abstract level of groups, and not at the level of individual cognition. Moreover, since individuals may belong to a number of social groups, they may have several ideologies, each variably influencing their social practices, depending on the situation. This also explains why personal uses of ideologies in concrete situations may be variable and often appear contradictory.

### ***Models***

General group ideologies and the specific group attitudes they organize may be expressed directly in discourse, for example by general expressions of opinions such as 'Comen are less competent' in mild chauvinist ideology. However, much opinion discourse, including that in the press, is more specific, and expresses not only group opinions, but also personal knowledge and opinions about specific people, events and situations ('I disapprove of this invasion'). Such personal and specific opinions derive from socially shared opinions or attitudes as well as from people's personal experiences and evaluations as these are represented in so-called *mental models*.

Models are the crucial interface between the social and the per-

nal, between the general and the specific, and between social representations and their enactment in discourse and other social practices. Essentially, models represent people's everyday experiences, such as the observation of or participation in actions, events or discourse. Unlike social representations they are personal, subjective and context-bound: they feature what individuals know and think about specific events, and account for the fact that such events and actions are subjectively interpreted. Thus, models explain why interpretations of discourse are constructive.

People continually 'model' the events of their everyday lives, including the communicative events they engage in, or the news events they read about in the *prensa*. Thus, remembering, storytelling and editorializing involve the activation of past models, whereas intentions, plans, threats and announcements involve models about future events and actions. In sum, all our social practices are monitored (intended, understood) in terms of mental models.

Although such models as a whole are unique, personal and context-bound, large parts of them are of coarse social in the sense that the knowledge and opinions they embody are merely personal 'instantiations' of sociocultural knowledge and group opinions. In other words, models are indeed the interface between social representations, including ideologies, on the one hand, and social practices and discourse on the other hand.

#### From *models to discourse*

We now have the vital missing link between ideology and discourse. Ideologies organize specific group attitudes; these attitudes may be used in the formation of personal opinions as represented in models; and these personal opinions may finally be expressed in text and talk. This is the usual, indirect way of ideological expression in discourse. We have seen above, however, that in some forms of discourse, ideologies may also be expressed directly, that is, in general statements.

Because models represent what people know and think about an event or situation, they essentially control the 'content', or semantics, of discourse. However, since people know and think much more than they usually need to say for pragmatic reasons, only a

fraction of the information in a model will usually be expressed in text and talk. This is of course also true for opinions: people do not always find it necessary or appropriate to say or write what they think. In many respects a text is merely the tip of the iceberg of what is mentally represented in models. And conversely, due to the construction of a model and the application of knowledge and attitudes in this construction, people usually understand much more of a text than it actually expresses.

We have already suggested that people form not only models about events they know about (through personal experience or through communication), but also specific models of the communicative events in which they participate. Such so-called context models will typically feature the overall definition of the situation (e.g. a lecture, talk with a friend, or reading the newspaper), as well as subjective beliefs about participants in different roles, about overall aims and goals, the setting, and so on. Context models are crucial in the production and comprehension of discourse. Whereas event models represent what is being communicated, context models largely regulate *how* this is being done, that is, the phonological, syntactic, lexical and other formal variation of text and talk. Like event models, such context models may of course also feature opinions, such as evaluative beliefs about other communicative participants, their roles, credibility, and so on. Thus, reading editorials usually involves the formation of opinions not only about what is said, but also about the writer, or the newspaper.

It **should** be stressed again that the sociocognitive framework presented here does not imply any primacy for the cognitive or the social dimensions of discourse or ideology. Rather, it aims to show the close relations between mind and society. It does, however, imply that, both theoretically and empirically, societal structures cannot be directly related in any way to discourse structures. This is only possible through social actors and their minds, that is, through the mental interpretations or constructions of social and situational structures by group members. MI accounts that ignore cognitive analysis of the processes involved in the development and uses of ideology are in our view simplifications or reductions. Indeed, if social structures (such as those of domination) could directly influence (cause?) social practices and discourse, no ideologies or other shared social representations of the world (such as knowledge) would be needed in the first place. And if individual experiences



and interpretations (as represented in models) were ignored, this would imply that all social actors in a group would do and say the same thing.

### 3 Opinions

Before we examine in some detail the various expressions of opinions in editorials, we need briefly to attend to the rather elusive notion of 'opinion' itself. Above, we defined opinions as 'evaluative beliefs', that is, as beliefs that feature an evaluative concept. In many cases, this poses no problem. Any belief that presupposes a value, and that involves a judgement about somebody or something, is evaluative, such as 'X is good (bad, beautiful, ugly, honest, intelligent)', on the values of a group or culture. Some judgements are evaluative only indirectly or in specific situations, for example when someone or something is believed to be small or large, light or heavy, and when such a factual belief itself presupposes, a value judgement (e.g. 'being a small X is bad').

The same is true for categorizations, for example when someone is believed to be a thief or a terrorist. These may be factual beliefs. If socially accepted, general criteria can be specified for such a categorization, such as the judgement of a court of law. On the other hand, if the factual criteria are less relevant, and the concept is used only or primarily to make a value judgement (someone is bad), then we are dealing with an opinion. Obviously, as is the case for all values and judgements, these may *vary* culturally and socially. And as soon as groups and conflicting group interests are involved, such opinions will be said to be ideological.

This highly simplified account has practical implications for discourse analysis. It hides fundamental problems of cognition and philosophy, such as the basis of knowledge and belief, evaluations and judgements (Kornblith, 1994; Lehrer, 1990). In the social psychology of opinions and attitudes, such issues are usually ignored (Eagly and Chaiken, 1993).

In a discussion of ideology in particular, the criteria of truth and falsity become relevant here. Thus, if we define opinions as evaluative beliefs, and contrast these with factual beliefs, as we have done, we are begging the question if we are unable to distinguish between

evaluative and factual beliefs. Both involve a judgement, but simply saying that this judgement presupposes values in opinions, and truth criteria in factual beliefs, again needs further explication. Indeed, to take a contemporary example, is the belief 'smoking is bad for our health' an opinion or a factual belief? It features a typically evaluative concept ('bad') and as such seems to be an opinion, namely about smoking or smokers. On the other hand, when based on the conclusions of scientific research, then the belief may be seen as factual.

In other words, it depends on the grounds or criteria of judgement. If these grounds are merely a cultural or group norm or value (e.g. 'smoking is bad to damage our health by smoking') then the belief is an opinion. However, if the grounds are socially shared criteria of truth (e.g. observation, reliable communication, valid inference, scholarly research, etc.), or other knowledge based on such criteria, then the belief is factual (true or false). Both types of judgement are socially, historically\* and culturally relative. Also, truth criteria may be different in different periods or for different groups. But for beliefs to be factual, it is only necessary that within each culture or group accepted criteria of knowledge are applied. And whenever these particularly favour a special group, the very system of knowledge and truth criteria may be ideologically based.

Note that we do not use the concept of 'opinion' here to refer to false beliefs, as is sometimes done in everyday language use. False beliefs are also factual if they can in principle be evaluated relative to a system of truth criteria. Conversely, opinions and ideologies are often said to represent the 'truth' for specific people or groups, but that does not make them factual in our sense. As soon as norms and values are involved, they are evaluative and not factual.

Many other relevant notions that are commonly used in the distinction between knowledge and opinions, such as subjectivity and objectivity, or consensus, are ignored here. Similarly, a more discursive definition of knowledge and beliefs will not be proposed either. Although opinions are usually the object of disagreement, and are debated in specific argumentative situations, the same may also be true for factual beliefs. That is, the claim defended in an argument may be either factual or evaluative. Nor do we accept the discursive reduction of opinions and knowledge. For us, as for most psychologists, these are mental representations, and not discursive struc-

tures. That is, people are said to 'have' and share opinions, whether they express them in discourse or not, and both within and across specific contexts. That beliefs are socially acquired, constructed, changed and used (also) through discourse is obvious, but that does not make them discursive in the usual sense of being a property of discourse'.

#### 4 Discourse Structures

After this brief summary of our theory of ideology and opinion, we now need to examine in some more detail how these may be expressed in *text* and talk in general, and in opinion articles in the press in particular. A discourse analytical approach to this question will typically do this by examining the various levels and dimensions of discourse.

##### *Lexical items*

Traditionally best known in studies of ideology and language is the analysis of *lexical items*. Words may be chosen that generally or contextually express values or norms, and that therefore are used to express a value judgement (e.g. 'terrorist', 'racist'). But although there are many predicates that are normally used to express an opinion (e.g. 'beautiful', 'dirty' etc.), others may be used either factually or evaluatively (e.g. 'democratic', 'intelligent'), depending on whether a knowledge or value system is presupposed in their use, as discussed above.

However, in a discourse analytical approach in particular, we want to go beyond this obvious analysis of lexical items. Opinions may also be expressed in many other, much more complex, ways in text and talk: for instance in headlines, story structures, arguments, graphical arrangements, syntactic structures, semantic structures of coherence, overall topics, and so on. Let us examine some of these somewhat more carefully, and thereby focus on the various semantic structures of discourse, since they form the core 'content' of the expression of ideological opinions (van Dijk, 1995; for the semantic

notions used here, see van 1985). As a convention, we shall now refer to meanings, concepts and propositions (and hence to opinions) by using single quotes, and to the actual words, sentences and other expressions of such meanings with double quotes, or in italics.

### ***Propositions***

Concepts and their expressions in lexical items usually do not come alone, but combine into *propositions* expressed by clauses and sentences. Thus the occurrence of words that seem to imply opinions (such as "terrorist") does not mean much if we do not know the meaning of the sentences in which they occur (and, of course, of the whole text and context, to which we turn below). For Motorice, there is considerable difference between the proposition 'He is a terrorist' and its denial 'He is not a terrorist', even if they both contain the concept of 'terrorist', and although both may be taken as expressions of opinions.

Propositions are usually analysed in terms of a main predicate (usually interpreted as a property, event or action) and a number of arguments with different semantic roles, such as Agent, Patient, and so on, as in the proposition (Agent: *terrorista* Patient: *hostages*)'. This proposition may be modified further by modalities such as *was necessary* (*possible, unlikely etc.*) *that*'.

Each category of a proposition may *be* modified again by another predicate: for example *'desperate (terrorist)'* and *'terrified (hostages)'*. As discussed above, each of these concepts may feature implied opinions. Thus, choosing *'desperate'* rather than *'cold-blooded'* as a modifier for *'terrorist'* implies another, less negative, opinion suggesting that the terrorist had no other option but to kill the hostages. This implication may also be inferred from the choice of modalities such as *'They were obliged to'*. We find such use of necessity-modalities quite often in strategies that limit the negative actions of the authorities of the *We*-group, as in *'The police had to act tough against the demonstrators'* (for examples in news reports about police actions, see van Dijk, 1988a).

Interestingly, however, it is not merely the concept involved in the proposition, but also the propositional structure itself that may express opinions. If negative acts are attributed to people appearing

in the Agent role, *then* they are held (more) responsible for these actions than if they appear in other roles. Moreover, the *syntactic structure* of the sentence expressing such propositions may vary such that the agency of a particular person or group is de-emphasized, as is the case in passive constructions (e.g. "The demonstrators were killed by the police", or "D atas (were) killed"). In this way, OUR people tend to appear primarily as actors when the acts are good, and THEIR people when the acts are bad, and *vice versa*: THEIR people will appear less as actors of good actions than do OUR people (for detailed analysis of these strategies, see e.g. Fowler, 1991; Fowler et al., 1979; van Dijk, 1991).

We find here a first general strategy for the expression of shared, group-based attitudes and ideologies through mental models. This strategy of polarization - positive ingroup description, and negative outgroup description - thus has the following abstract evaluative structure, which we may call the 'ideological square': .

- 1 Emphasize our good properties/actions
- 2 Emphasize their bad properties/actions
- 3 Mitigate our bad properties/actions
- 4 Mitigate their good properties/actions.

These functional moves in the overall strategy of ideological self, which appear in most social conflicts and actions (e.g. in racist, sexist etc. discourse), may be expressed in the choice of lexical items that imply positive or negative evaluations, as well as in the structure of whole propositions and their categories (as in active/ passives etc.). Here 'our' may refer to the in group or its friends and

'their' to the outgroup and its friends or allies (for social psychological studies of these principles, for example in attribution, see e.g. Fiske and Taylor, 1991; for the dimension of impression management, see Tedeschi, 1981).

### *Implications*

Opinions *need* not always be explicitly expressed in a proposition, but may be implied. Theoretically, this means that given an (expressed) proposition P, one or more propositions Q1, Q2, . may be inferred from P on the basis of an event model or context model.

These models may themselves embody instantiated knowledge or attitudes. Thus, in an editorial about the expulsion from Israel of 400 members of Hamas (an Islamist Palestinian movement), the *New York Times* concludes as follows:

- (1) Whatever Israel's offenses, it mocks reality for Arabs to imply that the expulsion is equivalent to Saddam Hussein's crimes against Kuwait or Libya's complicity in state terrorism. By all means hold Israel to 'the letter of Geneva Conventions. But don't exaggerate the scale and nature of the infraction. (*NYT*, Ed., 29 Jan. 1993)

The first sentences imply the opinion proposition that the Arabs are exaggerate, whereas the last sentence implies that the "infraction" of the Israelis is in fact minor, which is also an opinion. Also the choice of the very concept of "infraction" is itself a form of opinion. Since the Israelis are on OUR side, and Saddam Hussein and Libya are typically enemies and hence THEM, we also see the basic ideological framework being expressed that explains such a mitigating operation, as well as the implied propositions (in our detailed analysis of a sample opinion aside below, we shall see how Saddam Hussein may also be used by Us to characterize other enemies).

### *Presuppositions*

Propositions may be implied because they are presumed to be known (to be true) or presupposed, given a model of an event. They may be strategically used to obliquely introduce into a text Propositions which may not be true at all. This is also the case for Presuppositions that embody opinions. In the previous example it was presupposed that the "Arabs" did indeed exaggerate the scale and nature of the "infraction", which by itself is a partisan opinion about the reaction of the Arabs. Earlier in the same editorial, we read the following passage:

- (2) Israel's defenders justly argue that the world takes too little note of the terrorist crimes committed by Islamic

extremists, and of their fanatic determination to block any compromise settlement between Israelis and Arabs.  
(NYT, Ed., 29 Jan. 1993)

Since the NYT claims that Israel's argument is valid, it also espouses the presuppositions of that argument, namely that "Islamic *extremists*" commit terrorist crimes and block any compromise settlement. The phrasing of that presupposition, while not attributed (by quotes) to Israel, is that of the NYT, and hence also the opinions implied by the use of the lexical iteras "terrorist crimes", "extremists" and "fanatic determination". No such words are used to describe the expulsion of 400 Palestinians by Israel. On the contrary, the article explicitly claims that this "infraction" should not be exaggerated. Earlier in the article, it is therefore described as a "blunder", and not as a "terrorist crime" of the State of Israel, as the Palestinians probably would have done. We see again how opinions about friends and enemies are being described, implied and presupposed following the ideological square proposed above.

### *Descriptions*

Moving now to the proper discursive level of *sequences* of propositions, we find that events may be described at various levels of generality or specificity, and with many or few propositions at each level (van Dijk, 1977). If we apply the ideological square to this phenomenon, we may expect that Our good actions and Their bad ones will in general tend to be described at a lower, more specific level, with many (detailed) propositions. The opposite will be true for Our bad actions and Their good ones, which, if described at all, will both *be described* in rather general, abstract and hence 'distanced' terms, without giving much detail.

Thus, again in the example from the NYT quoted above, the expulsion of Hamas members is evaluatively summarized with the predicate "blunder" and as "violating the Geneva Convention". Later, these Palestinians are described as "huddling in tents in a freezing mountainous land in Lebanon", which may be read as implying something negative for the Israelis. However, this is the only

negative way Israeli policies are described in this article, whereas (those of the Palestinian "terrorists" and the "Arab" Mates are described in much more detail, as we have seen before in the description of the "terrorist crimes" and the "fanatic determination", as ~11 as in the following passages:

- (3) But it would compound the blunder and jeopardise Middle East peace talks for Arab Mates to press for United Nations sanctions before President Clinton's team has *even* settled in. . . . (Palestinians huddling in tents . . . That perfectly suits the banished Islamic militants, since their plight has effectively stalled the peace talks they vigorously oppose. (*NYT*, Ed., 29 Jan. 1993)

Thus, Palestinians are described as wanting to block talks "vigorously", and to be "fanatically determined" to do so, and this is also true for other parts of the text: negative Arab reactions are spelled out in detail (and emphasized) and negative Israeli actions given little attention, mitigated or structurally subordinated.

Methodologically, single examples like these do not prove much; additional quantitative demonstration would be needed **in order** to establish that the overall strategy indeed applies. The example given is merely illustrative for the kind of operation at work: what we want to know is how opinions and attitudes may be expressed in discourse. Other work may then examine how *often* this happens, and whether the empirical hypothesis (about the differential descriptions of ingroups and outgroups) **may hold up in quantitative comparisons**.

### *Local coherence*

One of the crucial semantic conditions of textuality is coherence, that is, the property of sequential sentences (or propositions) in text and talk that defines why they 'hang together' or form a 'unity', and do not constitute an arbitrary set of sentences. Both in formal discourse studies and in our sociocognitive approach, coherence is defined relative to models. That is, roughly speaking, a sequence of sentences is coherent if a model can be constructed for it. This may involve causal or conditional relations between the facts as repre-



sented by a model. In other words, coherence is both relative and referential. That is, it is defined according to the relations between facts in a model which is referred to or talked about.

If coherence is based on models, and models may feature opinions, which in turn may be ideological, it should be expected that coherence too may involve opinions and ideologies. If Dutch employers believe, as many of them do, that immigrant workers do not work hard enough, or have insufficient knowledge of the language or lack education, these are all opinions, but since they are believed to be 'true', they may function as the causal part of explanations, and thus make the texts of employers coherent (from their ideological perspective at least). Others might prefer to attribute high minority unemployment to the discrimination of the employers, rather than to blame the victims, and the 'Ideological coherence' of their explanatory discourse would therefore be rather different (for detailed analysis of such biased talk by corporate managers, see van 1993).

Besides this form of referential or extensional coherence, sequences of propositions may also be related by intensional or functional relations. One proposition may be a Generalization, specification, Contrast or Example of another proposition. Since meanings rather than models seem to be involved here, it is hard to see how such relations can be ideologically controlled by opinions. Yet, the use of such functional relations may have strategic, argumentative or rhetorical functions. Thus, it is one thing for an editorial to describe a 'riot' in terms of black 'violence', but quite another to add the Generalization that this is 'always the case', as also happens in many negative conversational stories about minorities (van Dijk, 1984, 1987a). Similarly, in the same story, a story-teller may point out that We have to wait years for an apartment, but that *They* get a new apartment right away. Storytellers thus may make a general claim, for example about the lack of cultural adaptation of immigrants, and then add an example (which may turn into a complete story). In sum, the intensional relations too may accurately reflect conflicting relations between groups, cognitive operations of generalization and specification, of comparison and contrast, and so on, which may also obviously be imbued by ideological opinions. This is the case in the example discussed above concerning the political consequences of the expulsion of 400 members of Hamas from Israel:

- (4) **The greater challenge now is to revive the stalled peace talks. To do so, the Administration will need Arab help. Now that Israel has compromised on an issue of principle, are Arab leaders willing to do the same? (NYT, Ed., 3 Feb. 1993)**

The opposition and comparison between Israelis and Arabs become particularly *olear* in the last sentence, which is based on a contrast between Israel's 'positive' action (having granted the return of 100 f 394 expelled Palestinians) and scepticism about any positive action by Arab leaders. In both cases, opinions are involved, and opposing the two parties as in this example is one move in the broader strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation (indeed, the following sentence is "Predictably, the PLO has rushed to say no.").

### *Global coherence and topics*

Local coherence between propositions of text or tallo is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for discursive coherence. Another unifying principle is at work, namely that of overall or global coherence, as it is defined by 'topics' of paragraphs, large stretches of text or whole discourses. Such topics may be formally described as semantic macrostructures that are derived from local microstructures by specific mapping rules. In actual discourse processing, these rules take the form of efficient (but fallible) macrostrategies for the construction or local execution of topics (van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983).

Since propositions may be belief propositions, macropropositions may represent opinions, as is typically the case in editorials. Locally and globally, an editorial will express a local and global opinion, respectively, as would typically become *olear* in summaries. Indeed, the NYT editorial of which we just analysed a fragment, is summarized as follows in the Lexus database from which it was downloaded:

- (5) **An editorial congratulates President Clinton for his first Middle Eastern foreign policy success in extracting con-**

cessions from Israel on the issue of its deportation of 400 Palestinians, concluding that Arab countries can best promote the new seriousness about international law by returning to the peace talks. (NYT, Ed., 3 Feb. 1993)

Thus, the speech act of congratulation first presupposes that Clinton did something well (an opinion), and the (summary of the) recommendation at the end also involves an opinion about what Arabs should do. Thus, more generally, we may expect editorials of course to express, presuppose or imply opinions at the overall, macro level too.

That such opinions reflect partisan positions and ideologies may be concluded from the same example. We can infer which side of the Middle East conflict the NYT editors stand on by the fact that they congratulate Clinton for "extracting" a concession from Israel, instead of blaming him for being unable to force the Israelis to comply with the resolution of the UN Security Council (ordering the return of all those who were illegally expelled). This stance is despite their criticism of Israel, which is also evident in this editorial. Indeed, a locally critical opinion about Israel is not the same as an overall, macro opinion about Israel that is negative. On the contrary, negative opinions about Israel typically occur in lower-level, subordinate sentences.

### *Semantic moves*

Overall ideological strategies of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation may also be implemented at the local level of sentences and sentence sequences. In this way, one clause may express a proposition that realizes one strategy, and the next clause a proposition that realizes the other strategy. This is typically the case in the local semantic moves called disclaimers: "I have nothing against blacks, but . . .". In this so-called Apparent Denial, the first clause emphasizes the tolerance of the speaker, whereas the rest of the sentence (and often also the rest of the text) following the *but* may be very negative. In the same way, we may encounter Apparent Concessions in the same racist paradigm ("There are also intelligent black students, but ."), or Apparent Empathy ("Of course refugees have problems, but ."), and so on.

The very strategies on which such local moves are based are intended precisely to manage opinions and impressions, that is, what our conversational partners will think of us. Thus to avoid the negative impression of being an intolerant, ignorant bigot, the disclaimers are used as strategic prefaces to the negative part of the text. This does not mean that such moves are merely rhetorical. Obviously, speakers may well be convinced, on the basis of other (humanitarian) ideologies, that one *should* not have anything against blacks (Billig, 1988).

At the end of example (1), we find two Apparent Concessions in which Israel's "infraction" and obligations are conceded (in initial but subordinate clauses), but the main focus is placed on ridiculing the claims of the Arabs (comparing Israel with Saddam Hussein). **a** course, such moves may also apply to other parties, such as when the NYT criticizes Premier Rabin for acceding to the expulsion, as follows:

- (6) Whatever the domestic political costs for Mr. Rabin, magnanimity would better serve Israel's wider interests.  
(NYT, Ed., 29 Jan. 1993)

Thus, the concession part pays tribute to the reality of the internal opposition to lifting the ban on the expelled Palestinians, but the main thrust of the argument focuses on what the NYT thinks is best for Israel. Incidentally, also note the style of the recommendation, namely the choice of the very positive "magnanimity", which hardly seems compatible with undoing the expulsion of 400 citizens and complying with UN resolutions. Would the NYT describe a terrorist who releases some of his hostages as 'magnanimous'? That a critical position towards hiendo may also use kid gloves, and in fact express ideologically based opinions. This is a typical example of the strategy of emphasizing Our good actions.

### *Integration?*

Having reviewed the mapping of opinions on several semantic structures, we may ask ourselves whether some general principles may be derived from our analyses. Is there some 'logici' in the way

ideological (and other) evaluations tend to manifest themselves in discourse meaning?

To answer this question, let us briefly retrace the theoretical itinerary that brought us from ideologies to discourses. Discourse meanings derive from mental models of events, controlled by context models. These models may embody both personal and instantiated social opinions about events or about any of their relevant aspects (participants, their properties and actions, etc.). The social opinions to a specific event and context may be organized in attitudes, which in turn may be based on ideologies shared by groups. These ideologies are mental representations whose categories schematically code for the major social dimensions of groups (identity, activities, goals, position, value, resources), and involve interest-based selections of values that underlie the evaluations and the social practices of group members.

Thus, despite personal and contextual variation, opinions about events may be expected to express underlying ideological frameworks that also monitor social practices, and hence discourse, in strategic, self-interested ways. Especially in institutional and public discourse, it will generally be in the interest of a group if information is selected from a model and emphasized in discourse that is positive about the group of the speaker, and negative about opponents or Others. The converse is equally true: it will not be in our best interest to select and emphasize information that is negative for/about Us, or positive for/about the Others. This is precisely what the ideological square, discussed above, suggests as an overall strategy in Mapping models on text and talk.

How does such an overall strategy influence discourse semantics? What semantic strategies does it entail at all levels of discourse meaning? We may try to answer these questions by distinguishing various dimensions of the mover that translate overall ideological strategies into semantic structures.

*Volume* Models are generally much more detailed than the texts that express them. We usually know more than we say, and the same is true for our opinions, which we may often keep to ourselves, for good contextual reasons. This means that we are able to say either More or less about an event. We may describe it in a few general propositions, or use many propositions that characterize the

event (and our opinions about it) in detail. Obviously, such variation may be constrained by the ideological square in an obvious way: say a lot about Our good things and Their bad things, and say little about Our bad things and Their good things.

*Importance* Models, like most mental schemata, are hierarchically organized: they have overall propositions (macrostructures) at the top, and more specific propositions at the bottom; for the same reason, some information is important, other information less important, conceptually speaking, in the overall representation of an event. Since people may understand and hence model each event differently, the hierarchical structures of events may be different too. Similarly, for strategic ideological reasons, such differences of importance may be manipulated in discourse meaning. Some propositions will only appear at the lower-level microstructure, others typically may function as overarching macropropositions. Thus, a 'race riot' may be mainly conceptualized as an act of 'black mob violence', as conservative white politicians and media will conceptualize it, or as a form of 'urban resistance', as black or white radicals might conceptualize it. Macrostructural organization of models (how the event is globally interpreted) will thus influence the topicalization of discourse, and hence its global coherence and what is presented as important or as less important information. The same may be true at the micro level, where importance may translate in prepositional (and then causal) structure, as is the case with topic-comment or focus organization. As a strategy, then, we will expect that information that is favourable about/for Us and unfavourable for Them will be construed as important or topical macro-information, and vice versa.

*Relevance* The pragmatic dimension of relevance is about the utilitarian importance of information for (language) users or participants, and is therefore controlled by context models. Important information may still be less relevant for the readers or the audience, and conversely, unimportant details may well be relevant for them, if we measure relevance in terms of the seriousness or the scope of consequences for its users. Trivially, we may expect Our discourses to feature information and opinions that are particularly relevant for Us, and irrelevant for Them, and vice versa. For in-

found less relevant by white newspaper editors and hence be accorded less newsworthiness, as is indeed the case (van Dijk, 1991).

*Implicitness/Explicitness* The presence or absence of model information may be semantically construed as explicitness or implicitness. The influence of the ideological strategic agenda is obvious here: make explicit the information and opinions that are good for Us, and bad for Them, and vice versa. Again, this may be at the overall level of the discourse (as we have seen for Volume), or at the level of words and sentences.

*attribution* In explanatory contexts, acts may be variously attributed to actors, and explained in terms of their properties or the situation (Antaki, 1988; Jaspars, Fincham and Hewstone, 1983). Agency, **responsibility** and blame may also be attributed as a function of ideological orientation: good acts will usually be self-attributed to Ourselves (or our allies) and bad acts other-attributed to the Others (or their allies), and in both cases these groups are assigned full control and responsibility for their acts. The converse is *true* for Our bad acts and Their good acts: Our bad acts will be de-emphasized and attributed to *matonees* beyond our control, and the same is true for Their good acts ("they were just lucky"). These various attribution strategies may appear at all levels of action description, and also appear in word order (responsible agency may be preferentially expressed by grammatical subjects and in initial position).

*Perspective* Inherent in the notions of ideology, attitudes and the specific opinions based on them is the notion of 'position'. Events are described and evaluated from the position, point of view or perspective of the speaker. This perspective may be cultural, social, personal or situational, and may apply to all levels and dimensions of discourse. That is, judgements are by definition relative, as the concept of 'standpoint' (a synonym of opinion) suggests. This is true for the subjective point of view of the individual, as much as for the shared, inter-subjective opinions of group members. Situational

perspective is expressed, first of all, in context-dependent deictics (pronouns, demonstratives and adverbs like 'I', 'here', 'now' and



verba (like 'come' and 'go') and position- or relation-dependent nouns (such as 'honre', 'sister' and 'neighbour'), among other expressions. Personal perspective trivially manifests itself in fixed expressions such as 'from my point of view', 'in my opinion' or 'as far as I am concerned'. The plural forms of such expressions may indicate social perspective ('from our point of view' etc.), which however may also simply be expressed by first person plural pronouns, as in the well-known ethnocentric example "We are not used to that there", used to express negative opinions about the acts of foreigners. A well-known slogan expressing a sociopolitical (and geographical) perspective (an anti-American one) is of course "Yankee, go home!". Implicitly this is also the case in the racist slogan of the National Front in France: "Les Français d'abord", which of course suggests that the person who is speaking is French.

In sum, given a mental model of an event, and a context model of the current communicative event, the overall strategic principles examined above allow language users to express their opinions not only through explicitly evaluative words, but also through:

- the generality vs. specificity and quantity of model propositions used in descriptions of events;
- the explicitness vs. the implicitness of model propositions;
- the importance assigned to propositions relative to others;
- the contextual relevance assigned to propositions;
- the attribution of agency, responsibility and blame for actions;
- the perspective from which events are described and evaluated.

These different discursive strategies have several functions, such as enhancing the vividness of descriptions or the credibility of accounts, and for our analysis they are particularly relevant in expressing the ideological perspective and the opinions of groups and their members. In each case, then, the strategy applies 'via' the ideological square: the type of description (general, or explicit etc.) must be in Our favour, in Our interest, or in any other way contribute positively and persuasively to Our self-presentation and impression management, or conversely, contribute to the negative presentation of our opponents, enemies or the Others in general.

### *Surface structures*

In the previous sections we focused on the mapping of opinions and ideologies on semantic structures of discourse. Meanings are, however, expressed in various 'forms' or surface structures', that is, in concrete lexical items, clause and sentence structure, syntactic categories, word order, discourse intonation, graphical structures, and the organization of macrostructures in canonical schemata, such as those of narration, argumentation or news reporting.

Many of the semantic structures examined above, as well as the opinions embodied in them, thus need to be inferred from such surface structures. However, these structures or forms may also play their own role in the expression of opinions. One of the ways they do this is by the formal implementation of the ideological square. Meanings, and therefore opinions, may also be emphasized or de-emphasized by their expressions. They may be expressed on top (as in headlines), earlier in the text (as in leads of news reports), in topical and end positions in sentences, or through a complex system of rhetorical 'figures of speech' (repetition, parallelism, metaphor comparison, irony, litotes etc.), or vice versa for meanings/opinions that need to be de-emphasized. We shall not further investigate the details of these expression structures of opinions in this chapter, but it should be borne in mind that many of the discursive strategies of ideological expression are formal. Conversely, in text comprehension, these expression structures influence semantic interpretation, and hence also the construction of opinions in models.

## **5 An Example**

To illustrate the theoretical analysis proposed above, let us at this point examine in some detail how ideologies and opinions may be expressed and combined at the different levels of a typical 'opinion aside'. Here we take an op-ed piece in the *Washington Post* (15 December 1993), written by Jim Hoagland (© 1997, Washington Post Writers' Group; reprinted with permission):

**GADHAFI: SINISTER POSTURING**

[1] A moment comes when a tyrant crosses a line of no return. In the grip of megalomania, he is incapable of making rational calculations of cost and gain. He strikes out in fury and in fear, intent on destroying even if it means destruction will visit him in turn.

[2] Iraq's Saddam Hussein crossed that line in the spring of 1990. But the outside world paid little heed until he invaded Kuwait that summer. Libya's Moammar Gadhafi now has crossed that line. The international community should not repeat the mistake it made with Saddam.

[3] On Sunday Gadhafi invited the world's two most notorious Palestinian terrorists, Ahmed Jibril and Abu Nidal, to visit Tripoli, perhaps to set up headquarters there. The Libyan leader told a cheering crowd in the town of Azizia that the invitations were meant to defy the United Nations.

[4] Gadhafi has shown that he no longer values the cloak of silence or acquiescence in his evil that he sought to purchase or extort. He is on the attack, pushing his long confrontation with the West back to the breaking point.

[5] For months Egyptian diplomats, fearful of the damage Gadhafi could do their country, and European oil executives and Washington lawyers, enamored of the lucre Gadhafi could send their way, have spoken of Gadhafi's new 'moderation' and have urged the international community to treat him with reasonableness and patience.

[6] He was, the lawyers submitted, about to change his spots on terrorism. He was, the Egyptians said, misunderstood and in any event a lesser evil than the Islamic fundamentalists who have declared war on the Egyptian regime. He was, the oil men claimed, a leader they could do business with, on favorable terms.

[7] Their pleas for patience he in ruins now that Gadhafi has renewed his public embrace of terrorism, in word and deed. He has responded with vitriol and menace to the mild economic sanctions placed on his regime by the U.N. Security Council.

- [8] **The Security Council has demanded that Gadhafi turn over for trial abroad two of his security aides, who are accused by the United States of carrying out the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 on Dec. 21, 1988. His refusal to do so triggered sanctions that restrict air travel to and from Libya and freeze Libya's oil revenues banked abroad.**
- [9] Intelligence reports link Jibril and his General Command organization to the planning of the Pan Am massacre, which cost 270 lives. Although Jibril's exact role is not clear, Gadhafi's invitation strips away the pretense that the Libyan is interested in seeing justice done in this case.

[10] As sinister as his invitation to the two managing partners of Terror Inc. is Gadhafi's suspected involvement in the kidnapping over the weekend in Cairo of Mansour Kikhiya, his former foreign minister, who broke with Gadhafi over terrorism to become a leading dissident — and a resident of the United States, due to become a U.S. citizen next year.

[11] Kikhiya's associates tell me he had gone to Cairo reluctantly and only after receiving personal guarantees from senior Egyptian officials of safe passage. He was well aware of the presence of Libyan secret police and of the Egyptian government's effort to shield Gadhafi from international punishment by arguing against sanctions.

[12] But on Dec. 10 Kikhiya disappeared from his hotel room in Cairo. Left behind in the room were the insulin and syringe Kikhiya needs every eight hours to treat his diabetes.

[13] Politically sensitive visitors like Kikhiya are routinely kept under surveillance by Egypt's internal intelligence service. His disappearance raises the question of Egyptian complicity in or tolerance of a Libyan plot to eliminate the Libyan exile movement. The movement has begun to worry Gadhafi, who brands the exiles as 'stray dogs and donar slaves.'

[14] Gadhafi stands at a crossroads similar to the one that Saddam confronted in the spring and summer of 1990. He

**responds with a similar lashing out at those who would thwart him, even at the cost of embarrassing an Egyptian government that has defended him.**

[151] Libya is not broke or gravely weakened by a long war, as Iraq was. But Gadhafi is boxed in and embarrassed by sanctions. Sanctions show the Libyan population that Gadhafi is not the omnipotent, respected leader he claims to be.

[161] Rather than sink into impotence, Saddam went to war. Gadhafi does not have the ground army to do that. But he does have an army of international terrorists, including those who carried out his orders to bomb Pan Am 103 five years ago this month.

[171] Abu Nidal has also favored the Christian and Jewish year-end holiday seasons as moments for terrorist outrages. His men shot up the airports in Rome and Vienna in December 1985.

[181] It is impossible to know if Gadhafi was simply reminding the world of his sinister capabilities, or foreshadowing new atrocities with his public welcome of terrorists. But he has warned the world that he must be watched and confronted anew after a season of phony peace.

Let us analyse the evaluative and ideological strategies of this article paragraph by paragraph, beginning with the headline.

#### GADHAFI: SINISTER POSTURING

In this headline, as well as in the rest of the text, the main target for Hoagland's attack is of course Gadhafi, generally known as the devil incarnate of conservative US foreign policy (for details, see Chomsky, 1987). Structurally, the importance of Gadhafi is first emphasized by his appearance in the title, which means that he is the actor of a macroproposition. Secondly, fronting his name in the title further emphasizes his agency and responsibility for the nominalized verb "posturing", an effect that would be less obvious in the normal ordering for this sentence: 'The sinister posturing of Gadhafi'. Then, Hoagland's negative opinions are explicitly expressed in the choice of "sinister" and "posturing", the first predi-

cate being associated with secret and darle forres, and the second with affectation and a pose, and as 'saving a big mouth, but really being nobody. Both predicates are obviously intended in the political sense, and hence expresa not so much Hoagland's personal opinión, but a shared US evaluation of Gadhafi. Note also that *what* Gadhafi has done is not topicalized in the headline, but only the *way* he does it, so that it is the evaluation itself that is thus emphasized. In the system of the ideological actuaire, this is a dear example of negative other-presentation, as well as an exampie of emphasizing these negative properties of the Other.

*1. A moment comes when a tyrant crosses a line of no return. In the grip of megalomanía, he is incapable of making rational Calculations of cost and gain. He strikes out in fury and in fear, intent on destroying even if it means destruction will visit him  
M turra.*

The relevant opinions expressed here appear *first* of all in the lexical style, that is, in words such as *tyrant*, *megalomania*, *strikes out*, *fury*, and *destroying*, all predicated of an imaginary dictator, but (after the title) clearly meant as a generic description that fits Gadhafi. The political evaluation becomes obvious in the choice of *tyrant*, which categorizes him not only as undemocratic or even as a dictator, but also as someone who viciously oppresses his people. Moreover, the choice of *tyrant* is part of a long tradition of Western descriptions of Eastern 'despots', also applied, for example, to Saddam Hussein, but seldom to 'Western' dictators, such as Batista of Cuba, Pinochet of Chile or Stroessner of Paraguay. That is, there are various types of denomination, and the most important, political criterion for the choice of opinion pre-dicates is whether dictators are 'Ours' or 'Theirs', following the ideological principle that 'Our bad things tend to' be mitigated, and 'Theirs emphasized' (see also Herman, 1992; Herman and Chomsky, 1988).

Another evaluative sequence or 'opinion fine', continuing the idea of *Posturing* in the title, is picked up by the use of *megalomanía*. Again, Gadhafi is negatively being described as someone who thinks he is bigger than he is, but the specific teten also implies a form of Mental deficiency: he is a iunatic. This personal evaluation of someone who 'has lost his mirad' also appears in the statement that Gadhafi is unable to snake rational calculations, that he strikes out in fury and fear and is self-destructive.

Thus, whereas Gadhafi is first politically placed beyond the pale of democracy and humanity, he is now also excluded from the world of 'us, sane' people. These various evaluations presuppose that Hoagland speaks from the point of view of Western, US, rational, democratic people(s), and the usual ideological polarization *itere* therefore opposes this group with one of its main enemies, while Gadhafi is the incarnation of anti-Western, anti-US, anti-democratic (etc.) forces.

Thirdly, Gadhafi is not only a tyrant (over his own people) and a lunatic, but also a threat, since he is said to be "intent on destroying", which brings in the relevant international perspective already addressed above. Note that the opinion about his being a threat is not itself expressed, but based on an inference, namely from the explicit opinion that he is destructive, and the implicit knowledge that he is a head of state: violent, crazy dictators are a threat to the world, as was already suggested by the use of the concept of 'destruction' later in this paragraph.

Perhaps most interesting in this paragraph is the seemingly innocent phrase "even if it means destruction will visit him in turn", since the international dimension of Gadhafi's aggressiveness *itere* seems to suggest a legitimization of retaliation, following the maxim derived from militarism we are allowed to destroy someone who is bent on destroying us. It was precisely this legitimization, of course, that Reagan used when the US air force bombed Tripoli some years earlier, killing a large number of civilians, among them a child of Gadhafi. (In that case, incidentally, Gadhafi's alleged posturing, rather than his destructiveness, was seen as sufficient reason to attack Tripoli.)

*2. Iraq's Saddam Hussein crossed that line in the spring of 1990. But the outside world paid little heed until he invaded Kuwait that summer. Libya's Moammar Gadhafi now has crossed that line. The international community should not repeat the mistake it made with Saddam.*

As may be expected, a 'tyrant' like Gadhafi invites comparison with the other demon of US foreign policy: Saddam Hussein. The same metaphor used in the Gulf War (about the line drawn in the sand of the desert) is now applied to the case of Libya, in order to accentuate

the similarity of the threats posed by both dictators to the international community. Note that "the outside world paid little heed" seems a factual statement, but in fact implies an opinion, namely that according to Hoagland the outside world *should* have paid more attention, which is a normative implication, as is also clear from the last sentence of this paragraph ("should not repeat the mistake"). Here we encounter the typical recommendation speech act that is a standard part of editorials and op-ed articles: after an analysis of what is wrong (an opinion), it is concluded what should be done, which semantically is also an opinion, and pragmatically an act of advice or recommendation.

3. *On Sunday Gadhafi invited the world's two most notorious Palestinian terrorists, Ahmed Yassin and Abu Nidal, to visit Tripoli perhaps to set up headquarters there. The Libyan leader told a cheering crowd in the town of Azizia that the invitations were meant to defy the United Nations.*

After the evaluative introduction of *the* editorial, we here find the newsworthy 'facts' that form the immediate cause or 'peg' of the opinion piece, namely Gadhafi's invitation to two Palestinians. The evaluation implied by the use of *notorious* and *terrorist* is standard fare, and is part of the overall opinion-coherence of the article, representing fragments of the attitude of Hoagland and many of his colleagues towards the Middle East conflict. The last sentence of this paragraph is more interesting. As such, it is a factual statement, and not an opinion; indeed, it may be true or false, and the truth criteria are non-subjective (although there may be some dispute about when a group of people is a 'crowd' and when their actions are called 'cheering'). And Gadhafi might indeed have defied the United Nations, although there may be some doubt about whether he actually said it 'that way'. Given the authority of the UN, however, defying the UN would normally be a negative act (although the USA itself has defied UN resolutions many times). This means that, by stating this, there may be at least an implicit opinion, based on the general evaluative belief that defying legitimate institutions is wrong. This description fits in with the earlier characterization of Gadhafi as a dangerous megalomaniac, and at the same time provides the 'proof' of such a characterization: he who defies the UN must be both aggressive and a fool.



4. *Gadhafi has shown that he no longer values the cloak of silence or acquiescence in his evil that he sought to purchase or extort. He is on the attack, pushing his long confrontation with the West back to the breaking point.*

The opinions here are very explicit, as is most obvious in the standard way of describing the most terrible of opponents: they are *evil*, just as Reagan famously described the former USSR as the 'evil empire'. The words *extort*, *attack* and *confrontation* are similarly borrowed from a lexical repertoire designed to describe the acts of the enemy. Note, however, that the opinion does not merely imply a negative evaluation of aggression. There is a lot of aggression in 'the world that Jim Hoagland and the *Washington Post* do not routinely write about. The crucial point, as also expressed by the earlier verb *defy*, is that Gadhafi confronts Us in the West (and especially Us, Americans). That is, the ideological polarization between Us and Them (or in this case between Us and Him) is being activated here to influence the organization of opinions in this article. As the theory predicts, this will usually happen through *Specific* negative attitudes about the Others, in this case about violence and aggression in general, and their terrorism in Particular. Hoagland follows this standard evaluative scenario rather faithfully.

5. *For months Egyptian diplomats, fearful of the damage Gadhafi could do their country, and European oil executives and Washington lawyers, enamored of the lucre Gadhafi could send their way, have spoken of Gadhafi's new 'moderation' and have urged the international community to treat him with reasonableness and patience.*

Hoagland's opinion discourse now shifts to those who are prepared to accept Gadhafi, and the choice of *enamored of the lucre* implies that being overly fond of profits is viewed negatively here - not, of course, because this is out of tune with the basic tenets of capitalism both Hoagland and the *Washington Post* undoubtedly espouse, but rather because this means doing business with the enemy. The use of quotes in the description of Gadhafi as being 'moderate' implies that Hoagland does not agree at all with such a characterization, as indeed his earlier epithets in this piece show rather unambiguously.

Here the old rule seems to apply that the friends of our enemy are also our enemy, so that oil executives and lawyers in this case are evaluated accordingly.

6. *He was, the lawyers submitted, about to change his spots on terrorism. He was, the Egyptians raid, misunderstood and in any event a lesser evil than the Islamic fundamentalists who have declared war on the Egyptian regime. He was, the oil men claimed, a leader they could do business with, on favorable terms.*

The arguments of those who have a less negative view of Gadhafi are replayed, but again the lexicalization of these arguments does not seem to imply agreement. The use of the verbs *submitted* and *claimed* suggests as much, and also the expression *about to change his spots on terrorism* reveals Hoagland's serious doubts about Gadhafi's change. The rhetorical parallelism of the sentence structures of this paragraph further stresses this doubt about the claims of those Hoagland criticizes. Interesting for our analysis is that opinions also appear when people evaluate others' opinions.

7. *Their pleas for patience lie in ruin now that Gadhafi has renewed his public embrace of terrorism, in word and deed. He has responded with vitriol and menace to the mild economic sanctions placed on his regime by the U.N. Security Council.*

The justification of Hoagland's scepticism follows in this paragraph. A new enumeration of Gadhafi's evils is used to belie those who wanted to placate him: *embrace of terrorism, vitriol and menace*. These opinions fit the overall negative characterization of Gadhafi as a dangerous terrorist. In light of such an opinion, being patient is clearly found an inadequate response. For our analysis this is interesting, because it shows that words that usually imply positive opinions are used here in a critical way.

8. *The Security Council has demanded that Gadhafi turn over for trial abroad two of his security aides, who are accused by the United States of carrying out the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 on Dec. 21, 1988. His refusal to do so triggered sanctions that restrict air travel to and from Libya and freeze Libya's oil revenues banked abroad.*

These factual statements simply appear to explain the historical background of the (mild) economic sanctions against Libya, and do not explicitly express opinions. Yet, mentioning the fact that • Gadhafi is accused of bombing an aircraft is in line with, and supports, the earlier qualification of Gadhafi as a terrorist, whereas referring to his refusal to comply with the demands of the Security Council is a specification of the earlier evaluative description of defiance. In other words, factual statements about negative actions (bombing an aircraft) may not express an opinion, but strongly suggest such an opinion, which in this case might be that of the reader. Moreover, factual statements may support opinion statements: bombing an aircraft is a form of terrorism, and refusal to comply with demands of the International community (and especially of the UN), a form of megalomania.

9. *Intelligence reports link Jibril and his General Command organization to the planning of the Pan Am massacre, which cost 270 lives. Although Jibril's exact role is not clear, Gadhafi's invitation strips away the pretense that the Libyan is interested in seeing justice done in this case.*

A similar negative description of the 'facts' is given here of another enemy, Jibril, and the selection of *massacre* and *cost 270 lives* is clearly monitored by a strongly negative opinion. Note also the disclaimer *although Jibril's exact role is not clear*, which keeps some journalistic distance from the evidence of the intelligence reports, but which also suggests that what follows is evaluated negatively.

10. *as sinister as his invitation to the two managing partners of Terror Inc. is Gadhafi's suspected involvement in the kidnapping over the weekend in Cairo of Mansour K khiya, his former foreign minister, who broke with Gadhafi over terrorism to become a leading dissident — and a resident of the United States, due to become a U.S. Mixer: next year.*

The key-word of the title, *sinister*, appears again to qualify Gadhafi's actions as threatening and ominous, along with the rest of his portrayal as a terrorist. The picture is completed here by Gadhafi's (suspected) involvement in kidnapping a former associate. Inviting

two terrorist, and important ones at that, is by itself a negative act, and calling it 'sinister' merely emphasizes the point. To mark the usual *Us vis. Them* articulation of ideological discourse, Kikhiya is now promoted to the status of dissident: the enemies of our enemies become our friends, and may be awarded citizenship. In other words, Gadhafi is not merely suspected of kidnapping a former associate (indeed, why would that be relevant to 'Us?'), but in fact of kidnapping a (near) US citizen, and hence attacking the USA.

11. *Kikhiya's associates tell me he had gone to Cairo reluctantly and only after receiving personal guarantees from senior Egyptian officials of safe passage. He boasts of the presence of Libyan secret police and of the Egyptian government's effort to shield Gadhafi from international punishment by arguing against sanctions.*
12. *1314t on Dec. 10 Kikhiya disappeared from his hotel room in Cairo. Left behind in the room were the insulin and syringe Kikhiya needs every eight hours to treat his diabetes.*

The only expression of opinion in these two paragraphs may be the reference to Libya's secret police: only dictatorship have a secret police, so Libya is a dictatorship. Note also the reference to a source, a rather unusual move in an opinion article, but here strategically effective, while making the accusations more credible. Similarly indirect is the *reference* to Kikhiya being a patient in need of regular medication, but having left his medicine in the hotel room, which suggests that he must have been kidnapped. This 'proof of abduction' at the same time emphasizes the negative characteristics of the Others: they *even* abduct sick men and do not give them their medication.

13. *Politically sensitive visitors like Kikhiya are routinely kept under surveillance by Egypt's internal intelligence service. His disappearance raises the question of Egyptian complicity in or tolerance of a Libyan plot to eliminate the Libyan exile movement. The movement has begun to worry Gadhafi, who brands the exiles as 'stray dogs and dollar slaves.'*

Note that the security force of 'our friend' Egypt is not called a 'secret police' but an "internal intelligence service", thus lexically differentiating those associated with Us, and those associated with Them. The use of *brand in the* last sentence implies that Hoagland does not agree with the way Gadhafi describes his opponents, and the nature of the description itself is so preposterous that merely mentioning it is sufficient to qualify it. That exiles are called 'donor slaves' by Gadhafi further exacerbates the polarization between Us and Them, since 'dollars' are associated with the West or the USA.

14. *Gadhafi stands at a crossroads similar to the one that Saddam confronted in the spring and summer of 1990. He responds with a similar lashing out at those who would thwart him, even at the cost of embarrassing an Egyptian government that has defended him.*
15. *Libya is not broke or gravely weakened by a long war, as Iraq was. But Gadhafi is boxed in and embarrassed by sanctions. Sanctions show the Libyan population that Gadhafi is not the omnipotent, respected leader he claims to be.*

Paragraph 14 paraphrases earlier parts of the text, using the same comparison with Saddam Hussein, and *lashing out* continues the phrase "He strikes out in fury and in fear" used in the first paragraph. Both have negative implications. The opinion at the end of paragraph 15 is complex and interesting. The use of the verb "to show that" implies that the speaker holds the proposition to be true, so that Gadhafi in fact is *not* omnipotent and respected by his people, and hence he is a dictator. Similarly, since they hurt Gadhafi rather than his people, the use of sanctions is also legitimated, which is an indirect opinion.

16. *Rather than sink into impotence, Saddam went to war. Gadhafi does not have the ground army to do that. But he does have an army of international terrorists, including those who carried out his orders to bomb Pan Am 103 five years ago this month.*
17. *Abu Nidal has also favored the Christian and Jewish year-end holiday seasons as moments for terrorist outrages. His men shot up the airports in Rome and Vienna in December 1985.*

Although Saddam Hussein and Gadhafi are not comparable in military terms, Gadhafi makes up for this by his "army of terrorists", and his directing the bombing of Pan Am flight 103. What earlier in the text \*as a US accusation of Gadhafi's involvement is here presented as fact. And as before, sine Gadhafi associates himself with the terrorist Abu Nidal, he is himself a terrorist. These examples hardly express explicit opinions, but the description of the people he associates with as "terrorists" and their actions as "terrorist outrages" clearly reveals a negative evaluation.

18. *It is impossible to know if Gadhafi was simply reminding the world of his sinister capabilities, or foreshadowing neto atrocities with his public welcome of terrorists. But he has warned the world that he must be watched and confronted anees after a season of phony peace.*

In this concluding paragraph, the evaluative description *sinister* is used again, and *atrocities* continues the line of negative descriptions of the acta of Gadhafi. The final recommendation (that he must be watched) is, of course, itself based on norms and values informing this piece, and hence a political opinkon. Even the positive concept of 'peace' associated with Gadhafi may be converted into "phony peace", thus making Gadhafi unreliable even when he keeps quieta he can never be trusted.

## 6 Summary

Having brlefiy commented on the various types of opinion expression in a typical conservative op-ed article in the US press, we may at this point try to summarize our observations more analytically in light of the earlier theoretical framework.

### *Polarization*

Opinions May be organized following an ideological pattern that polarizes ingroups and outgroups, Us vs. Them. This principle also has a number of corollaries in the form of maxims, such as 'The Enemy of Our Enemy is Our Friend'. In this case, the basic dual

ideologies used are the familiar ones of Western superiority and Arab inferiority, whereby *We* are associated with positive values such as democracy, rationality and non-violence, and *They* 'with dictatorship, violence and irrationality. More specifically, the ideology of Arab inferiority here focuses on attitudes to terrorism, organizing a set of socially shared opinions about various aspects of terrorism and their associations (such as bombing, kidnapping, killing innocent people. Moreover, following the logic of Ingroup-Outgroup relations, the *Mera* are also presented as a threat.

#### *Opinion coherence*

Specific opinions about specific terrorists (Gadhafi, Nidal, Jibril) may follow the application of this general attitude. Together with conceptions about terrorist attacks and abductions of political opponents, this instantiation of an attitude also sustains what we have called the 'opinion coherence' of discourse in that various aspects of terrorism are being discussed.

#### *Attribution*

Attributions of negative actions to our enemies require that our enemies are described as responsible agents, who are consciously, intentionally and cynically aware of what they do and of the consequences of their actions, *even* if these actions may be branded as irrational or even crazy at the same time. On the other hand, those of *Us* who are too friendly towards our enemies do not fully realize what they are doing, and hence they may be advised to mend their ways.

#### *descriptions*

The identifying descriptions of groups or institutions related to *Us* and *Them* also follow the principle of ideological polarization. Thus, *Their* security forces are called the 'secret police', whereas *Ours* are an 'intelligence agency'.

### ***Interest***

Positive or negative opinions about Our or Their actions basically follow an evaluative logic based on a construction of what Our best interests are. Thus, Gadhafi's 'posturing' is not primarily judged to be evil' as such (indeed, many of Our friends, such as Israel, do likewise), but it is judged to be evil in that it is seen to threaten our (US, Western) interests in the world.

### ***Implicitness***

Opinions may be explicit and implicit, direct and indirect. Some °piabas in this op-ed article may be derivad from a combination of factual statements with the norms, values and positions of the author. Thus "crossing a line" is, as such, not an evaluative predicate, but in 'the present context it expresses the opinion that Gadhafi has gone too far. Similarly, the factual description of terrorist acts (such as bombing an aircraft) does not **express** an opinion either, but shared social attitudes about such acta allow readers to derive the appropriate opinions.

### ***Meta-opinions***

Opinions may be opinions about other opinions. Thus, (too) positive opinions about our enemies are disqualified (as too moderate, too Similarly, opinions may apply to speech acta of others. Doubts about the contenta; of the assertions of others may thus be expressed by discrediting them as mere 'claims' or 'submissions'.

### ***Expression***

The expression of opinions may be enhanced in several stylistic and rhetorical ways. Words describing negative acts may be taken from the repertoire of mental health, and opponents may be described as irrational, lunatic and megalomaniac. Another strategy is to compare a target enemy with another, certified enemy, e.g. Gadhafi with



Saddam Hussein, and Saddam Hussein with Hitler, and all of them with devils and demons. Negative characterizations are also enhanced by rhetorical contrast: by opposing negative actions by Them with positive ones by Us (e.g. mild sanctions of the UN are met by sinister posturing and threats of terrorist warfare). Also alliterations (fury *and* fear), parallelisms and especially lexical repetition (*sinister*) may attract attention to specific opinions. Similarly, negative opinions about Them tend to be detailed, repeated and illustrated with concrete examples: thus the terrorism of Gadhafi, jibril and Nidal is detailed by reference to the bombing of the Pan Am flight, the kidnapping of a Libran dissident, and so on.

### *Unmentionables*

Negative information and hence negative opinions about Us (i.e. self-critique) may be left completely unsaid in violent ideological confrontation. Not only Gadhafi totally evil, but We (the USA, the West etc.) are totally good. We have done nothing to provoke Gadhafi. Thus, the equally terrorist bombing of Tripoli by the US air force, killing innocent children, is not even mentioned, although hinted at with a phrase like "destruction will visit him". Thus, our attacks on our enemies are always provoked and hence justified.

### *Arguments*

Opinions usually need support. That is, they are preceded or followed by a sequence of assertions that make them more plausible by various rules of inference, based on attitudes and values. Similarly, possible negative opinions about us are forestalled by implicit counter-arguments against such opinions. Opinions in op-ed articles are usually formulated as evaluative support for a speech act of advice, recommendation or warning, which define the pragmatic point or conclusion of an opinion article.

### *Using history*

Ideological opinions selectively invoke and hide history. Thus, terrorism is presented as a timeless evil. No historical background or

explanation for Their violence against Us is given, no reference to the Middle East conflict made, not even a brief disclaimer about the plight of the Palestinians. On the other hand, it is necessary to show historical continuity, so that we learn from history: hence the reference to the Gulf War and Saddam Hussein. Similarly, from a more cultural angle, we need continuity in presenting Arabs as the enemy of the West by describing them in terms of ideological opinions that are part of a long tradition of Western superiority and Arab inferiority.

We have summarized the findings of our analysis in terms of a number of rather specific moves that are typical for the expression of underlying ideologies in opinion articles. These moves generally enact the major overall strategies of ideological discourse, namely those of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. At the same time, the discourse structures involved enable us to witness 'at the surface' some of the underlying trajectory that relates ideologies to discourse, such as the values involved in ideological statements, their polarization their implementation in domain-related attitudes (in this case about international politics), their influence on specific models about specific events and participants (what *Gadhafi* did), and the ways those are presented as a function of a context modal (of Hoagland writing in the *Washington Post*, especially for US citizens, and more specifically addressing US politicians and other elites, such as business people)•

## 7 Suggestions for Ideological Analysis

There is no one, standard way to do critical discourse analysis, nor to do ideological analysis of editorials or other types of text or talk. However, from the discussion in this chapter, as well as from our other work, the following practical suggestions may be derived for doing ideological analysis: (a) examine the context of the discourse, (b) analyse which groups, power relations and conflicts are involved, (c) look for positive and negative opinions about Us and them, (d) spell out the presupposed and the implied, and (e) examine all formal structures that (de)emphasize polarized group opinions.

### *Backgrounds*

No serious ideological analysis is possible without at least some knowledge of the 'facts', about the historical, political or social background of a conflict, its main participants, the grounds of the conflict and preceding positions and arguments. Many ideological moves closely involve the self-serving use and abuse of the 'facts'.

### *Context*

In order to understand the ideological position of the author (writer or speaker), describe the communicative context: group membership(s) of the author, the aims of the communicative event, the genre, the intended audience(s), the setting (time, location), the medium, and so on. Through the contextual occasioning or functions of the discourse, its ideological functions may be spelled out. For instance, an editorial may function as a critique and advice to specific (often elite) groups or institutions, and hence involves (power) relations between the media and media writers on the one hand, and these other groups, 'on the other. This context also defines the ideological dimension of the speech acts involved (e.g. warnings as a mean of enacting power).

### *Ideological categories*

Ideologies are the basic 'axioms' of socially shared representations of groups about themselves and their relations to other groups, including such categories as membership criteria, activities, goals, values, and crucial group resources. Look for expressions in the text that refer to these basic *categories* defining the *interests or identity* of the group the author belongs to.

### *Polarization*

Many ideologies sustain and reproduce social conflict, domination and inequality. This conflict may involve any type of interest (typically symbolic or material resources) mentioned above, and is char-

acteristically organized in a polarized way, that is, represented as Us vs. Them. This polarization is at the basis of much ideological discourse, that is, as the strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation. Since ideologies involve values, they typically surface as evaluative beliefs or opinions. Find all *opinions* in the text that enact such *polarized evaluation* of Us and Them. *tal*le discourse *analytical expertise* is necessary to do such an ideological 'reading' of the text.

### *The implicit*

Ideological opinions, however, are not always expressed in a very explicit way. That is, very often they are implied, presupposed, hidden, denied or taken for granted. Hence it is necessary to examine more systematically the *semantic* structure of the text for various forms of implication, indirectness or denial, as shown above. Indeed, seemingly non-evaluative, non-ideological descriptions of 'facts' may imply positive opinions about Us and negative opinions about Them. Also the ways the sentences of the discourse cohere (e.g. on the basis of causality) may be part of this implicit manifestation of ideology. Similarly, the overall coherence of the discourse in terms of topics or themes indicates what information (and what ideological opinions) are deemed more or less important, thus reflecting the structures of the underlying ideological mental models, attitudes *and* ideologies.

### *Formal structures*

Indirectly, the various forms of a discourse may also be involved in the expression or signalling of ideological positions. The ideological square of polarization applies here too. Structural features may emphasize or de-emphasize information or opinions about Us and Them: sound structures in talk (e.g. intonation, stress, volume, 'tone', applause, laughs); graphical structures in printed text (headlines, columns, placing, letter type, photos etc.); the overall (schematic) organization of the discourse (e.g. argumentation); lexical choice and variation in the description of Us vs. Them; and the syntactic structure of clauses and sentences.