

Framing the War on Terrorism? Linguistics Variation, Perspective and Iraq

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ON October 7, 2002, President George Bush delivered his Address to the Nation on Iraq stating quite firmly:

America believes that all people are entitled to hope and human rights – to the non-negotiable demands of human dignity. People everywhere prefer freedom to slavery; prosperity to squalor, self-government to the rule of terror and torture. America is a friend to the people of Iraq. (October 7 2002 whitehouse.gov).

Shortly after President Bush's Address, the "war on terror" was expanded to include Iraq. In the press, perspective is everything, and nowhere has this been more apparent in recent history than in the much publicized war on terrorism. Ideally, the fundamental function of press journalism is to inform the reader; therefore, a journalist's interpersonal positioning must enable or facilitate negotiation not only with readers but also with the institutions directly implicated by the stories being produced (Martin and White 2005). Spinning and framing is therefore at once both linguistic manipulation and variation, as well as strategic packaging, including but not limited to, the physical placement of the story and the exposure of key terms and ideas, such as 'war on terrorism.' When journalists frame news stories, they express and strategically manipulate rhetoric, sources, positioning, tone, and headlines with the purpose of representing and presenting a particular perspective on 'reality;' it is the classic case of *same news, different views*.

This paper will demonstrate that the press frames and varies the perspective of news stories in order to achieve a particular ideological goal. The focus is a comparative account of the third year anniversary of the American-led invasion of Iraq, examining Guy Gugliotta's (March 19 2006) assessment of America's military effort in the war on terror in Iraq (washingtonpost.com)

EVALUATING THE DISCOURSE OF WAR: EXAMINING
THE SYSTEM OF ATTITUDE IN THE PRINT MEDIA

Viktoria Jovanović-Krstić

THE LANGUAGE OF NEWS REPORTING has always been easy to twist and spin, and nowhere has this been more evident than during a time of war. In fact, survivors of World War II and the subsequent Stalinist oppression of half of Europe know this fact much too well (Makkai, personal communication). Remarkably, that the print media is evaluative in its reporting is a notion that many in the West apply specifically to Eastern block countries. However, the discourse of war is always about the language of war, and in this respect, it makes very little difference if the topic is World War II, Stalin, Bosnia or Kosovo. Nor does it matter whether the paper is German, Russian, Serbian or American. What matters is that in a discourse of war, writers use language to represent the world from a specific ideological perspective; one that requires clear villains, victims, and heroes.

News in the press is laden with evaluative language; language that allows the writer to express a position on a topic both objectively and subjectively. Often, the choice of language is strategic, with an end result in mind: it is not only to present the news, but to do so in a specific way. This paper is concerned with the discourse of war from the perspective of Appraisal theory, specifically the system of Attitude (hereafter AT). AT is based on the work of Australian functionalists Peter White (1994, 1998, 2004) and James Martin (2000). (See also Ideema et al. 1994). AT examines how writers use language to evaluate a text, a situation, a thing, an event, or a person. The analysis shows that the language of the press influences not only how the news is internalized by a reader but also the opinions that a reader forms. The paper first offers a brief description of AT with a focus on the system of Attitude and then applies the system of Attitude to the April 2, 1999 *New York Times* account of the emptying of Priština by Serb military and militia. Second, it demonstrates that writers can and do exploit language to construct particular views of the world by heightening a reader's awareness of one situation or position, while at the same time suppressing other possible interpretations.

1. APPRAISAL THEORY AND THE SYSTEM OF ATTITUDE. The system of Attitude examines how writers express emotional points of view, pass judgment on people and/or on the aesthetic quality of a process, phenomenon, or text (White 2004). Attitude is divided into three subsystems: Affect, Judgment and Appreciation. Each is concerned with how writers attach an intersubjective value or assessment to participants or processes (White 1998, Ideema 2004).

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"GoAhead, make my day": Judgment, Engagement, and Evaluation in the
Blogosphere.

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Abstract:

Blogging is a way to voice opinions, express judgment, and make an appeal. This paper assumes that the act of blogging is not only intrinsically dialogic (Martin & White 2005), but also ideologically and politically charged. Using the theory of Appraisal Analysis and its resources, this paper examines blogger comments to a series of three animated exchanges between Conrad Black and Michael Wolff (Jan. 06, 2009, *Full Comment*; Dec. 27, 2008, *Full Comment* and Dec. 17, 2008, *Off the Grid*). This paper asks: how do writers and readers negotiate interpersonal stance in blogs? What dialogic patterns are evident in the blogs? And what do these patterns reveal about the creation and maintenance of solidarity and social esteem in the blogosphere?

1.0. Introduction and thesis

Blogging is a way to voice opinions, express judgment, and make an appeal; it's a conversation of sorts between an intended reader, an author, and anyone else who wants to join the party. Various operational definitions for blogs exist (Blood 2005, Keren 2004, Lawson-Borders & Kirk 2005) but most agree that the prime criteria are that they are some type of on-line journal which allow for the posting of opinion, information, commentary, archive, and hyperlink in a reverse chronological order (Bolt et al., 2007). As a medium, weblogs provide an ideal forum to communicate with the masses (Bolt et al., 2007). As a communicative act, blogging is intrinsically interesting and interactive because the blogger is at once author - critic - reader. On the one hand, much like a large group milling