The Routledge Handbook of Language in Conflict

Edited by Matthew Evans, Lesley Jeffries
and Jim O'Driscoll

The Routledge Handbook of Language in Conflict

The Routledge Handbook of Language in Conflict presents a range of linguistic approaches as a means for examining the nature of communication related to conflict. Divided into four sections, the handbook critically examines text, interaction, languages and applications of linguistics in situations of conflict. Spanning 30 chapters by a variety of international scholars, this handbook:

- includes real-life case studies of conflict and covers conflicts from a wide range of geographical locations at every scale of involvement (from the personal to the international), of every timespan (from the fleeting to the decades-long) and of varying levels of intensity (from the barely articulated to the overtly hostile)
- sets out the textual and interactional ways in which conflict is engendered and in which people and groups of people can be set against each other
- considers what linguistic research has brought, and can bring, to the universal aim of minimising the negative effects of outbreaks of conflict wherever and whenever they occur.

The Routledge Handbook of Language in Conflict is an essential reference book for students and researchers of language and communication, linguistics, peace studies, international relations and conflict studies.

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Routledge
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Acknowledgements

We would like to express our thanks to all of the contributors who have worked with us on producing this volume, which we hope will stimulate further exploration of the boundaries between Linguistics and Peace and Conflict Studies. We are particularly grateful to Professors Tom Woodhouse and Oliver Ramsbotham for agreeing to write an Afterword from their perspective in Peace Studies. Our hope is that a conversation between our fields may follow from the publication of this volume. We are delighted that we have been able to include so many different approaches to this interface and especially pleased to be able to include in the final section some examples of very practical ways in which language can be part of the solution to the things that divide human beings from each other. The volume would never have happened if we had not been working on our own corner of this field in relation to mediation communities across the UK from Belfast to Cambridge and from Bournemouth to Dumfries over the last few years. The goodwill and expertise of the people we met through this work are humbling. They have inspired us to, first of all, bring together the scholars and practitioners in this volume and secondly to continue to pursue our own research into the communication inherent in mediation encounters. We will be returning to this work now that the Handbook is complete. A further source of encouragement has come from the people we met at conferences of the Conflict Research Society. Their enthusiasm for our work reinforced our conviction that it is a project worth pursuing. We would also like to thank everyone who has helped us at Routledge. One final mention is to acknowledge the very great contribution made by Simone Schuller, one of the early members of our team, now working for peace on behalf of the EU. Her influence is there wherever this work is worthy, though she is responsible for none of its failings.

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Introduction

The origins of *The Routledge Handbook of Language in Conflict*

Lesley Jeffries and Jim O'Driscoll

When we started working on a "Language in Conflict" project a decade ago, we had a range of things in mind. We had started by considering some basic questions, the answers to which follow below. These were:

- what do we mean by conflict?
- how does our definition (or definitions) compare with that used in conflict and peace studies?
- what are the different ways in which language (and linguistic research that has already been undertaken) impinges upon the types of communication involved in conflict situations?

Following this initial scoping of the field as we saw it, we realised that there were myriad ways in which we could follow up with some basic research as well as attempting to unite researchers with overlapping interests in the field in some way. We therefore embarked on a number of small research projects reflecting our own linguistic interests (see Evans and Jeffries, 2015, Evans and Schuller, 2015) as well as setting up a web-based forum for discussion of linguistic aspects of conflict and some training materials for non-linguists who wish to understand more about the tools of analysis that we use (see languageinconflict. org.uk).

In 2013, a new journal (*The Journal of Language, Aggression and Conflict*) was initiated, mainly from the field of pragmatics, and in particular the subfield of (im)politeness research. This publication was a welcome innovation and, edited by Pilar G. Blitvich and Maria Sifianou (both of whom have contributed to this volume), it continues to provide a platform for work in this field. However, we had already embarked upon planning a handbook of language in conflict and we thought there was room for both. We felt in particular that there might be some benefit to the field as a whole for a handbook that would scope it, enabling future researchers to decide how their work fits in among other research into language in conflict.

I.1 What is conflict?

There are several divergent characterisations and definitions of what conflict is (some of which are discussed by contributors to this volume). Our working definition is that it is:

> any situation or behaviour involving parties (individuals or groups) who are, or consider themselves to be, instrumentally, intellectually and/or emotionally opposed or simply feel antagonistic to each other.

This is perhaps so wide as to be more of a circumscription than a definition and we imagine it will need refining as more work is done. But for our purposes a "catch-all" understanding is necessary because of our perception of the role of language in conflict, which is that the same linguistic and interactional features can be as relevant in the most trivial and fleeting two-person squabble as they are in the most intensely felt, long-standing antagonism between large groups (e.g. nations). Indeed, this commonality is one of our motivations for promoting the study of the role of language in conflict. The more general motivation is the simple observation that, short of firing missiles or throwing punches, language and the interaction accompanying it is involved in every stage of every conflict: people are moved to act the way they do by their worldview, for whose formation their previous experience of language has been largely responsible; most conflicts are conducted through language (even those that include punches or missiles); most can only be transformed through dialogue. While the overt reasons for conflict are rarely linguistic in nature (see Section II of this volume), it would not be stretching a point to claim that language *constitutes* conflict.

Rather than agonise over a precise definition at this point, then, we are more concerned to consider what is or can be involved in a conflict, the factors that will have a bearing on how it is conducted, whatever its nature. To this end, there follows a suggested inventory that circumscribes all the possible variety of interaction that takes place within the context of conflict. Its intention is to provide a vocabulary for this variation, to offer a checklist of situational features that could have a bearing on the nature, development and outcome of conflictual encounters and to take a first step towards a possible typology of conflict situations. It is based on the assumption that the "settings" on each of the identified parameters have a profound effect on the way conflict participants conduct themselves and therefore will influence the nature and progression of a conflict.

The inventory is divided into four parts, each of which addresses a particular question, as follows: who? (parameters of participation); how? (categories of means); what? (categories of object); when and where? (spatio-temporal categories).

I.1.1 Parameters of participation: who is involved and how are they involved?

Scale of engagement

How many individuals are actively participating? Of course, there may be (and often are) many others engaged behind the scenes, but this parameter refers to those enacting conflict in any one encounter. From 1:1 (e.g. a couple having a fight) to many thousands (e.g. a large-scale demonstration).

Scale of effect

How many individuals stand to be measurably affected? From just two (e.g. the parties in a small-claims court) to large swathes of the global population (e.g. peace negotiations between countries at war).

Permeability

To what extent are members of opposing sides fixed? From closed (i.e. the parties are clearly identifiable and restricted, as in a civil court hearing) to entirely open (e.g. anyone can "take sides" – or change them – in a public meeting called for the purpose of discussing an issue). Those present may disagree about individuals' group membership – or indeed their right to be considered a party at all – which might affect their ability to participate in the interaction.

Power

From symmetrical to very asymmetrical. This parameter involves potential divergences between participants regarding their ability to influence proceedings and outcomes. These result not only from existential aspects of the wider context (e.g. unequal distribution of military might, financial muscle or soft power) but also prevailing social values and linguistic capital in the specific activity-type (e.g. legal experts versus lay people in court proceedings).

Visibility

Who else (other than those actively engaged as conflicting parties) is privy to what happens? From nobody to everybody. Crucially, this parameter refers not only to knowledge of the occurrence of an encounter but also to the extent to which it is directly witnessed, since conflicting parties are likely to behave very differently when alone with each other, in the presence of a few witnesses or before TV cameras.

Direct/indirect

To what extent are the parties engaging directly? Is their conflict being enacted through third parties (with varying possible degrees of autonomy)?

Representativeness

To what extent are those directly engaged acting on their own behalf? (Or are they merely representing a position? If so, what latitude do they have?) This question is the converse of direct/indirect above.

I.1.2 Categories of means: how is conflict expressed and manifested?

Channel

A list of means for relaying language (e.g. face-to-face, phone, email, Twitter, letter, displayed notice, badge, distributed flyer, newspaper), but can also involve non-verbal signs (e.g. clothing, mannerisms, use of projectiles, display of physical presence).

Language activity/genre

For example, informal discussion, formal warning, formal negotiation, debate, semi-public meeting, report. This category involves issues of accountability and confidentiality. For example, is a meeting on-record or off-record? (And if the former, how is it to be recorded?) The precise nature of an encounter, and its assumed purpose are often matters of contest in themselves and/or involve divergent assumptions on the part of participants.

Intensity

This is a cline, from inflammatory verbiage, through clearly articulated language of entirely neutral affect, to barely articulated "bad feeling".

Strategy

A short list of future prospects projected by one party intended to induce change in an opposing party (e.g. changed perspectives, dire consequences, benefits). These may be contained in a single speech act (e.g. an assertion, a threat, a promise) or in large-scale non-verbal actions (e.g. overt military manoeuvres).

I.1.3 Categories of object: what is presented as at issue?

These categories can be expressed as a contest between two mutually exclusive propositions, as follows:

Possession

"I want X" versus "You can't have it (perhaps because I want it)". This category most typically involves territory, goods or money.

Action

"I want to do X" versus "No, you can't do X (perhaps because I want to do it)". This is typically about access to resources or facilities, or about performing actions.

Procedure

"Let's do X" versus "No, let's not do X (perhaps let's do Y instead)". All ideological debates within a society about mores and laws fall into this category.

Commission

"I want X (to be) done" versus "No, X will/should not be done".

Cutting across these basic categories are several more. One of these admits the possibility that the matter is not so clear-cut.

Focus

How clear is it? From high focus (clear, single object of dispute) to very diffuse in which more than one of the above categories of object arises. For example, a person who alleges unfair dismissal may clearly frame their case as one of possession (e.g. "I want compensation") or as one of action (e.g. "You have no right to dismiss me"). On the other hand,

s/he may frame it in a manner that allows for both ("You have no right to dismiss me, so I want compensation or my job back").

Two other categories refer to participants' alignment to the object of dispute.

Outcome = yes/no or either/or

There are two possible types of reason for "no" in the categories above. It could be a "flat" no, the naysayer arguing simply that "you have no right to X" and/or that "X is a bad idea". This means that the disputed outcome is *yes/no*. On the other hand, the reason for "no" may be because an alternative is predicated. This means that the disputed outcome is *either/or*. This latter type may be further subdivided into *either X or Y* and *either me or you*. The former is applicable to all categories of disputed object (e.g. "You can't have X, but you can have Y / Let's not do X; let's do Y instead"). The latter is applicable only to the possession and action categories (e.g. "You can't do X because I want to do X instead").

Perceived magnitude

This category is a continuum from, at one end, a perception that the object of conflict is a matter of great moment (invoking deeply-held principles and beliefs and/or involving the setting of precedent) to, at the other end, a feeling that it is an ephemeral matter (e.g. result of misunderstanding, "storm-in-a-teacup").

Finally, there are two categories that relate the object of dispute to its temporal existence.

Facticity

Is the dispute about something that is presented as having already happened, is happening or is planned? Conflicts concerning planned actions or arrangements may be easier to resolve, while those pertaining to done deeds are inherently more difficult because the original sense of grievance is likely to have been exacerbated by initial responses to its voicing.

Immediacy

To what extent is the object of the dispute an integral part of the encounter itself? From completely (e.g. refused entry to venue) to not at all (e.g. a debate concerning Israel versus Palestine).

I.1.4 Spatio-temporal categories

Stand-alone/episodic

Is the encounter a one-off (e.g. fight with a stranger over a parking space) or part of a series (e.g. one of several negotiation meetings)?

Domain

Three basic types may be recognised: private (individuals interacting as themselves without a significant audience); specialist-role-based (e.g. workplace, service encounters, state agencies; where individuals act as representative so that particular norms apply and issues of accountability arise); and public arena (whether local, national or international; where the numbers and identity of the audience is unknown).

Setting

For example, private place, institutional building, TV studio, street.

I.1.5 The nature of the inventory

The inventory presented in the last four subsections does not constitute a model. It is a list of categories many of which are interdependent; that is, "settings" on any one parameter often constrain what settings are possible on others. But our concern at this stage of our work in language in conflict is to be comprehensive rather than to achieve elegant parsimony. And the relevance of the inventory to conflict – and especially to language in conflict – should be obvious. It pertains to how conflicts are acted out. All of the contributions in this book take account of several of these settings in one way or another.

I.2 How do we link to conflict and peace studies?

The study of conflict and its application to particular cases of conflict is, quite rightly, a growing field of academic attention. A small number of British universities, for instance, have dedicated research centres and the number offering postgraduate-level taught programmes in the field runs into double figures. All the publicity materials for these programmes stress the ubiquity, and some the inevitability, of conflict in all areas of life and on all scales. However, the names of the department/schools under whose aegis they run (most frequently featuring the words "politics" and/or "international") and the majority of the programme titles (most frequently featuring – as well as "conflict" – "peace" and "international") indicate a tendency to concentrate on large-scale conflicts where conflicting parties are conceptualised, and their positions analysed, politically. The only other perspective that sometimes makes an appearance in the publicity materials is a psychological one, suggested by occasional use of the word "reconciliation" and in references to psychological aspects and the need for personal transformation with regard to attitudes, (religious) belief systems and the "inner being".

What is missing from these materials is the linguistic-interactional perspective. It is not, of course, that an awareness of the importance of language is entirely lacking from scholarship in and around conflict. The contemporary constructionist/constructivist emphasis in the social sciences – on "making" meaning – implies an integral role for language in constituting psychological and social realities (Shotter, 1993) and is evident even in volumes intended primarily for the student (see, for example, the prominence given to language and discourse in Burr, 2003). At a less general level, we see this emphasis manifesting itself in areas of political scholarship such as inter-community relations (e.g. Hayward and Mitchell, 2003), security issues (e.g. Balzacq, 2005) and most notably international relations (e.g. Debrix, 2003), where reference has been made to a "linguistic turn" (Fierke, 2002, p.331). Finally, at the most particular level of study – that of conflict itself – the role of discourse is sometimes addressed. One well-respected volume (Pearce and Littlejohn, 1997) is explicitly predicated on the belief that "communication" is "the essence" of all conflict and argues the need for "new forms of discourse" in tackling ideologically rooted antagonisms. Its social constructionist position, in which conflicts are viewed as made and remade in an ongoing process, advocates attention to "the particularities of the activity" rather than the constellations of clashing variables "in some abstract world of generalized persons" (1997: p.xii).

It is in Pearce and Littlejohn's book, however, that we see exemplified the rather narrow angle of the present linguistic/discourse turn in conflict-related studies. Despite its professed standpoint, it does not attempt to define what "communication" or "discourse" is, nor is a methodology offered for studying the nature of these "particularities" or for exploring how the abovementioned "persons" can be *de*generalised analytically. Its main thrust is to put forward and itemise the characteristics of a "transcendent" form of discourse (Pearce and Littlejohn, 1997, pp.151–215). This prescription is a laudable and valuable aim. But it is one more likely to be appreciated in the tranquillity of contemplation than the hurly-burly of participation. It amounts to a moral transcendence within individual psyches. Thus, to some degree, Pearce and Littlejohn reflect the same bipolarity noted previously with respect to courses in conflict studies – a macro (political-ideological) focus and a micro (psychological) one. Its emphasis on discourse and communication illustrates a widely held belief in their importance. But the mechanisms for studying *how* language is important are largely missing.

We believe that a more comprehensive, systematic application of the insights and methods of several subfields of linguistics offers a way for conflict studies to fill this gap between the macro and micro. One key contribution we hope to make is to widen the scope of situations to which Conflict Studies/Peace Studies, as a subject in its own right, can realistically be applied. Attention to the particularities of texts and encounters offers not only the possibility of elucidating how large-scale conflicts are played out through myriad smaller-scale encounters and exchanges, but also that of bringing relatively small-scale conflicts into the same conceptual field of view

There has, of course, been quite a large amount of scholarship emanating from subfields of linguistics that takes on board the inevitability of conflict, addresses antagonistic communication and interaction and explores how oppositional stances are created and maintained. One example has come from the (on the face of it, unpromising) field known as "politeness studies", which researches its opposite – that is, *im*politeness and rudeness (e.g. Bousfield, 2007; Bousfield and Locher, 2008; Culpeper, 1996, 2011; Culpeper and Hardaker, 2017). Another strand, more clearly belonging to the public arena, is that which studies confrontational broadcast talk and how the manipulation of situational norms and language resources can be used to set up the potential for conflict (e.g. Clayman and Heritage, 2002; Piirainen-Marsh, 2005). Yet more public is the attempt (Chilton, 2004; Chilton and Wodak, 2002) to apply linguistic insights to the (inherently conflictual) political arena in some kind of systematic fashion. Finally, the field known as Critical Discourse Analysis (Blommaert, 2005; Fairclough, 1995, 2001, 2003; Hodge and Kress, 1993 [1979]) has always been socially engaged and, in addressing itself largely to the study of how hegemony, inequality and power are enacted, often has conflict in its sights. These foci are examples of linguistic scholarship with relatively obvious applicability to conflict. There are several other tools and concepts from linguistics that can usefully be applied.

By and large, however, the overall contribution to conflict studies from linguistic scholarship so far has been the converse of that implied above in conflict scholarship. Just as conflict scholars employ insights from linguistics on an ad hoc and partial basis, so linguistic scholarship has employed a scatter-gun approach to the social, focussing either on particular issues or events in order to advance theory or on particular settings in order to describe the nature of interaction within it. In both cases, conflict swims in and out of view, just one element of a larger whole. Our intention is to raid both these types of scholarship, training their insights, theories and associated modes of analysis specifically on the matter of conflict.

I.3 What is in the volume?

From the outset, we were determined that this volume would be much more than a random selection of different types of linguistics, all with some relevance for conflict, useful though that could have been. We have long considered it important that scholars working on projects relevant for the real-world make explicit these connections and their potential impact, so one of our aims here was to encourage our authors to do so. In addition, we wanted to provide a framework for the different ways in which language impinges on conflict as a way through the morass of potential research approaches that could be relevant. This is particularly important for those outside of linguistics who may wish to inform themselves about linguistic aspects of conflict. Providing an overall division into three main types of contact between language and conflict may seem simplistic to those in the fields themselves, and there are certainly some overlaps where work draws on more than one approach, but we would defend the division on both practical and theoretical grounds.

First of all, it is helpful for policy-makers, practitioners in the field and conflict and peace theorists to have a straightforward framework for thinking about the relevance of language to their work. We have seen above that the importance of language in conflict has been recognised in these fields, but the lack of further development beyond acknowledging a "linguistic turn" (see above) may reflect the absence of linguistic input into those fields themselves. We therefore feel that we – and other linguists – have a duty to bring our knowledge to the attention of those who may be able to use it in practical ways in bringing about conflict transformation into something more positive.

The theoretical justification for a high-level division of research in linguistics relevant to conflict is that made in Jeffries (2000, p.5) as follows:

> Another basic insight that I remember from my early brush with scientific modelling is that no useful theoretical model can be as complex as the data that is being described. One of the strengths of theoretical models is precisely their aim of simplifying the complexity of the mass of data. What worries me about the rejection of some linguistic models we have seen recently is that they are not replaced by another equally simple model, or even by a more complex but more explanatory model. Instead they are replaced by models whose complexity equals that of the data and whose explanatory value is therefore very limited.

We therefore present a defiantly simple three-way division as the main structuring device for the *Handbook*, where we first of all distinguish between those aspects of language use that are textual (word and structure choices) and those that are interactional (pragmatic choices). Section I focuses on text in conflict and includes a range of chapters concerning ideational features of texts and Section II focuses on interaction in conflict concerning the interpersonal aspects of conflict communication. Section III looks at languages in conflict and takes a more socio-politically situated standpoint, looking at the role of languages and dialects themselves in decisions relating to conflict. Section IV, which focuses on linguistics in conflict, closes the volume with a different take on everything that has gone before, considering more closely and exemplifying how linguistic knowledge can play out in actual situations of (potential) conflict.

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Section I
Text in conflict

1

Introduction

Textual choice and communication in conflict

Lesley Jeffries

1.1 Why textual choices matter in conflict

This opening part of the *Handbook* concerns aspects of language which can be seen as both most and least obviously related to conflict. While the words we choose to use may appear to the lay-person as the most obvious way to offend or pacify those we find ourselves in conflict with, this section concerns not how we threaten (or find agreement with) others, but how we create a view of the world that may exacerbate – or ameliorate – situations of unacceptable conflict. We will consider the more direct interpersonal aspects of linguistic choices in Section II, but for now we will see how the effects of what we say/write – and how we say/write it – may feed into the fundamental structures of our worldview with the consequence of putting us at odds with those holding a different or an opposing world-view. While the worldview we create by our textual choices often directly impinges on our audience(s), it is convenient to separate out the textual choices from their (interpersonal) effects in order to make some progress in understanding each strand of communication.

1.1.1 Textual choices create an ideational/ideological worldview

The way in which we express ourselves includes many choices which together build up a worldview which our texts (whether spoken or written) present to the audience. This world-view makes assumptions about how the world is, particularly the human world. It delineates the shape, size, timescale and social structure of the world in the text and may imply or state how the participants, human and other, typically behave, or what typical characteristics they may have as well as the specific behaviours and characteristics the text is concerned with at any one point. A text may, for example, present people with certain characteristics (race, col-our, gender, sexuality, age) as essentially good or bad, on the basis of those characteristics. A place or an institution may be painted in glowing or dark colours with little or no evidence and as part of the background of the text. These processes are not in themselves wrong or harmful. They are an inevitable consequence of describing (a version of) the world in texts.

After Halliday (1985), we may label this worldview, using one of his "metafunctions", as *ideational*, by contrast with the *interpersonal* metafunction of language which we will

consider in Section II. Thus, any text (e.g. "I'm boiling") is likely, at one and the same time, to be presenting a particular (ideational) view of the world (e.g. the room is very warm) and may also be aiming for some interpersonal effect (e.g. for your hearer to open the door to cool the room down). The way in which both of these aims are achieved at once varies in relation to textual choices and context (and it provides linguistic scholarship with a great proportion of its more difficult subject matter).

When we consider texts relating to conflict situations at any level, from personal to international, we often encounter not only a worldview but a worldview with certain implied values. Thus, we can see that some texts may provide relatively benign (though nevertheless possibly contested) views of the world (e.g. whether or not the room is actually too warm can be a subjectively contested view) and others may provide not only ideational information on what the world is like, but also ideological information on the values espoused, whether consciously or unconsciously, by the producer of the text. Thus, a comment that the restaurant you are going to provides vegan food may demonstrate either the ideology of the speaker (that s/he does not think human beings should exploit the animal world for food/clothing and therefore approves of this option) or an ideology whereby the speaker thinks it right to demonstrate respect for such views in their hearer(s), whatever their own views. Whichever of these options is true in the situational/interpersonal context, the very *text* of an utterance like "We can go to Hansa's – they have vegan food there" itself embodies the value that on some level, vegan food is a good thing. Textual meaning, then, may carry the consciously-intended ideological outlook of the producer, but it may also simply reflect the subconscious ideological assumptions of the society or group in which the text is produced. We cannot necessarily know which of these is true of any text and in a way, the point is moot since it is how the text propagates ideation – and ideology – that we are concerned with here. Much communication in conflict appears to centre on the intended meanings of the participants in what they say or write, but this could be a red herring when what we need to discuss is the effects of their texts, irrespective of conscious intention.

Clearly, the values or ideologies embedded in texts produced during communication in a conflict situation may be precisely those which are contested by the conflict itself. As we will see below, this may be during a particular episode between parties to a well-defined conflict or it may be part of a longer, slower, debate across society and through history about what is acceptable and unacceptable. All such debate to the extent that it is respectful and open is preferable to physical combat. More often, though, there is no debate at all about the most important of the disagreements. These are the ones that are embedded at a level of textual meaning that is least accessible to challenges and may not even be clear to the text producers. The following section discusses the nature of such hidden meanings.

1.1.2 Textual choices are not only propositional but also hidden

Texts, however long or short, are the combination of fundamental linguistic meaning (i.e. structures/words/semantics) with particular contexts of use. We will discuss the wider situational and social context later, but here we will address the particular issue of what makes textual meaning different from basic linguistic meaning. We can visualise the textual layer of meaning as being added to the basic propositional meaning by the choices made between alternatives on a particular occasion of use. This is the reason that it can justifiably be linked to stylistics, which is the study of textual choices. Thus, if we aim to produce a text describing a dog eating a bone, it may be that we decide to characterise the dog as an active participant in this text ("The dog ate the bone") or we may decide to background the dynamism

of the dog in favour of a focus on the bone ("The bone was eaten by the dog"). This kind of active-passive relationship between alternative sentence pairs has been much-discussed by linguistics, including in syntactic theory (e.g. Chomsky, 1957) and in critical linguistics (e.g. Fowler, 1991, pp.77–9; Hodge and Kress, 1988), but there are many other features of textual meaning where the effects of choices can also alter the way a scene or event is presented (Jeffries, 2013).

Although they do not always explicitly present themselves in this way, the various approaches to discourse analysis (DA) that developed after the rise of Linguistics as a discipline in the early 20th century can be characterised as aiming to capture the kinds of meaning that are neither fully contextual (pragmatic) nor completely context-free (i.e. semantico-structural). With the possible exception of early versions of DA (see, for example, Brown and Yule, 1983; Coulthard, 1985), whereby the main concern is with the formal links between sentences, all other developments in describing "discourse" appear to be attempting to explain how language usage makes meaning over and above the basic propositional content but stopping short in many cases of characterising the full interpersonal and situational context.

While DA has produced a wealth of different frameworks with which to analyse text (see Alba-Juez and Juez, 2009 for an overview of some of them), none of these has so far become the default approach, though one strand of development of particular interest in the context of this handbook, usually known as CDA (Critical Discourse Analysis) developed from an explicitly Marxist position specifically with the aim of exposing the fostering of unacceptable ideologies by certain textual practices (see Bloor and Bloor, 2007; Fairclough, 1995). This may be the most obviously relevant development of discourse analysis in relation to conflict communication, but it too has produced many different terminologies and a range of approaches (see, for illustration, Machin and Mayr, 2012; Wodak and Myer, 2015) which over time have become increasingly concerned with context (of production and reception) and only a few of which remain primarily text-based. My own contribution to this field comes in the form of Critical Stylistics (Jeffries, 2010, 2015a, 2015b) whose aim has been to separate the analysis of text from the views of the analyst (i.e. it is not Marxist in essence) and also from the intended and received meaning by producer and recipient respectively. The other aim was to provide a coherent framework of textual features for researchers to employ.

There will be more discussion of the approaches used by authors of chapters in Section I of the *Handbook* but for now, we can note that many of the features examined by such approaches do not occur at the propositional level of lexico-grammar (plus associated context-free semantics). Rather, they use frameworks which access the background "scenery" of the text world. This includes value-laden ideologies that are taken for granted in the processing of a text and by this very mechanism have the power to influence the viewpoint of the reader, often beneath the level of conscious engagement.

1.1.3 This difficulty of identification can make ideologies hard to challenge/see

In order to discuss the problems encountered when challenging ideology in texts, I will explain examples here in terms of the critical stylistics framework. This framework is used by a number of the other chapters in Section I (Chapters 3, 4 and 5) but there are also different ways in which textual meaning can be accessed methodologically and described in theoretical terms, as we can see in chapters drawing on rhetoric (Sahlane) and on corpus methods combined with CDA (Chojnicka, Taylor and Millar). For exposition here, then,

I will use the notion of the "textual conceptual function" (TCF) from Critical Stylistics as a way to define the layer of meaning at which these features operate. What is meant by TCF is a kind of form-function pairing in which there may be a prototypical form (such as, for example, "no" and "not" in negation) which commonly identifies with the core meaning (e.g. of negation), but where there is also a range of more or less peripheral forms which may vary across the different levels of language structure (e.g. "un-" and "dis-" from morphology and "lack" and "fail" from lexis), even to the point of including body language (e.g. shaking of the head) or facial expression (e.g. turned down mouth and furrowed brow) to deliver the negated meaning.

The reason why negation (see Nahajec's chapter), opposition (see Davies) and other TCFs (see Alaghbary) matter is that they can provide a powerful backdrop for propositional meaning. Thus, for example, the proposition of a sentence such as "We must consider X" is relatively uninteresting and simply indicates that there is something we should take note of, but whatever is chosen to fill the X slot is potentially very powerful; for example, "We must consider the terrible mess that this government has made of the National Health Service". In this case, what gets included in a noun phrase (i.e. the phrase replacing X) is not open to question but becomes reified by its very naming. So, the reader is asked to engage with a proposition ("We must consider something") but is not invited to question whether the implied proposition in the final noun phrase ("The government has made a mess of the National Health Service") is in fact true. I sometimes play a short game in workshops and classes to illustrate this point. It is a version of the Victorian parlour game known as "Consequences", and it involves writing a word at the top of a slip of paper, folding it over so that your neighbour cannot see what you have written and then passing it to them for the next word to be added. What happens, if you instruct the participants to write first a determiner, then an adjective, then a noun, followed by another noun and maybe also a prepositional phrase (each time with the paper being passed on to the next person) is that the resulting random phrases name a number of "things" that have never been named before, but which take on a fascinating existence in the minds of the class. Thus, we have encountered "that huge cat duster in the cupboard"; "my green house book on the table" and other such imaginary items. Usually, the words chosen are quite mundane and frequently concrete rather than abstract, though they can be quite bizarre, like "this furtive dream bike" or "his wooden idea hat". Once encountered, these referents appear to exist, by the very act of naming.

This exercise demonstrates the power of naming, not just the process of choosing a particular noun from a number of options, but by also including words which pre- and post-modify it (the noun). While it is fun to play with them in this way, it underlines the more serious significance of phrases like "*a form of soft war that Russia is now conducting against the west*" (UK Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson to parliament on 6 March 2018, after the poisoning of a former Russian agent and his daughter in Salisbury). In this phrase, there is an assumption about Russian (governmental) behaviour, but it is constructed as the referent of a noun phrase, rather than as a proposition ("Russia is now conducting", etc.). The result is that the reader/hearer is less likely or able to challenge the truth or accuracy of this assumption, because, just like the "furtive dream bike", its existence has been established by naming it.

1.1.4 The repetition of ideologies can lead to naturalisation

Another important facet of the power of textual meaning is that however it is created (by naming, negation or some other feature), the repetition of an idea – whether ideational

(e.g. this room is hot) or ideological (e.g. Russia is the enemy) – can start to seem like common sense if it is repeated often enough. This process of an idea becoming seen as factual by repetition is known as *naturalisation*, and it can affect even the most educated and critical of readers/hearers. We are all susceptible to the power of repeated ideologies, such as "Women should be slim", in texts, even if our more political selves reject them when confronted with them head-on. It is the insidious nature of the half-hidden ideology that makes it so powerful and difficult to challenge. When combined with a conflict situation, perhaps one which has been ingrained for generation after generation, this kind of textual feature may naturalise and perpetuate the attitudes that prop up the conflict itself.

In long-standing conflict situations such as Israel–Palestine or Northern Ireland, the power of naturalised ideology to produce antagonistic attitudes in each new generation is often facilitated by the kinds of textual feature discussed in the previous section. We can also see similar processes at work in local or personal conflicts where, for example, an estranged husband and wife may name each other in increasingly naturalised ways (e.g. "that mad bitch", "that twisted bastard") so that it is difficult to perceive or label them in any other way.

1.1.5 These processes are independent of conscious intentionality

One further general point in relation to the significance of textual meaning in conflict situations needs to be made. Of course, it is perfectly possible to see examples of *explicit* ideology in the propositional content of texts (e.g. "We are opposed to the deliberate ending of any innocent human life from the first moment of its existence, conception" (Pro-Life, 2018). However, the ideology in such cases is open, clear and able to be questioned or challenged directly by similarly propositional counter-arguments. What we mean by *textual* meaning is the kind of meaning that is brought into being behind and around the propositional meaning and which can be accessed only with significant processing effort.

There is no *necessary* link, however, between textual meaning of this ideological kind and deliberate obfuscation or conscious manipulation. While it is perfectly possible for competent writers and speakers to self-consciously hide or obscure their ideologies by using textual features of the kind we are discussing, it is just as likely that they honestly see the naturalised ideologies they support as being factual, and therefore not open to debate or challenge. In addition, many ideologies are the product of tacit social agreement and are not contested publicly. These feed into texts without comment and are only brought to the surface when something happens to disrupt the accepted norms of a group or of society. Thus, although deliberate manipulation and obfuscation may be of interest in particular cases, we make no theoretical *linguistic* distinction between them.

1.2 The kinds of conflict that involve textual meaning

In our general introduction to this volume, we discussed the nature of human conflict short of violent physical strife. Often, of course, there are both linguistic and physical manifestations of conflict, but we are concerned here with the former, which we see as a characterising all human conflict to a greater or lesser extent. In this section, I will attempt to map out the types of conflict where textual meaning (as opposed to, or in addition to interpersonal meaning) could have an effect and indicate how the same textual features may play a part in the playing out of those conflicts.

1.2.1 International conflict between states and other parties

The word "conflict" perhaps brings international conflicts most readily to mind, though disagreements can occur at any level. The issues that arise between larger entities such as states or competing groups or tribes within a state are complex and qualitatively different in many cases from smaller-scale conflicts. There may be clashes over land, natural resources, political ideologies and historical actions which seem intractable (see, for example, Ramsbotham, 2016) and many years of diplomatic and other efforts may have gone into trying to resolve them. However, there remains, at the heart of all the negotiations and debate, the use of language to engage with the warring parties and factions. Other complicating factors in the linguistics of these situations are, of course, the question of which language(s) to use in any particular circumstances (see Section III for chapters relating to this issue) and the particular register(s) that arise from international diplomacy. Neither of these sets of complications can detract, however, from the fact that in any particular communication there is a need to choose words and structures. In other words, textual meaning of the kind defined in this chapter is always present and therefore always liable to import some assumptions – which may be ideological – into the situation.

1.2.2 Regional and local conflict between groups and organisations

Many people in the world live in situations where there is tension or even outright conflict between groups within the same geographical location or administrative unit (from village to city or county). As with international conflicts, the tension may arise from competition for resources, which, for example, in cities may be space, or what a lack of space causes, such as noise pollution. There may also be overlap between this category of conflict and more personal or cultural clashes based on race, age, lifestyle and so on. In many such cases, there is no direct communication between the parties and the conflict is entirely carried on in public discourse (e.g. through the pages of local newspapers or in discussions between the members of each "side" which emphasises and naturalises the stereotyping of the perceived "enemy"). This lack of direct communication is, of course, typical too of entrenched international conflict and in both cases the result can be physical violence replacing discussion.

Language *does* participate in these conflicts, however, in the manner in which texts represent the (splintered) world of the conflict. This textual representation is of course always crucial to the ongoing debate. Whether in the editorial of a newspaper, the shouting match in a city street or a conversation between those of like minds aimed at strengthening the antagonism towards the other side, all these uses of language make (textual) choices and these choices create assumed meaning.

1.2.3 Institutional politics at state/region/local level

Politics at all levels has its own language habits and this is evident in the disconnect that many citizens of all countries, whether democratic or not, feel in relation to their political leaders. As with diplomacy, politics has registers and shorthand, which is usually shared by political commentators (i.e. journalists) and the politicians themselves. The public, insofar as they are interested, may also know the kind of language that is used in this arena. There is very often, however, a feeling that the language is allowing politicians and their supporters to promote ideas and policies that citizens do not like. It is, however, not straightforward to find a way to pinpoint exactly what the linguistic problem is. One answer is that everyday

words (e.g. "choice", "respect") take on a different kind of meaning within the political sphere and can be both a shorthand for an assumed bundle of semantic features and at the same time relatively empty of signification. This kind of socio-political keyword has been studied using a combination of corpus methods and critical stylistic analysis in news reporting of the years when Tony Blair was prime minister (Jeffries and Walker, 2017). The resulting potential for disaffection and estrangement in the electorate as a result of their suspicion that linguistic choices may be hiding ideologies exacerbates social tension and may set the scene for conflict – between political leaders and the public in this case. It may suit certain kinds of ideological positions to stir up this kind of reaction, but often it is the unintentional consequence of operating largely within the political "bubble", and not conscious manipulation, that is at the root of the problem.

1.2.4 Personal/social/cultural politics

I have already mentioned the aspects of people's make-up that may contribute to feelings of estrangement from those who differ from us. These include race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, education, political leanings and many more. Each of us is a complex assemblage of many such features and this only leads to tension or conflict where our lives impinge on each other or to the extent that we feel morally or socially superior to the "other". While our identity may also cause positive engagement both with those who share and those who challenge our norms, there can be a combined effect with other pressures (e.g. shortage of resources) that leads to the "othering" of those with different identities and blaming them for the other problems. These are perhaps particularly highlighted where the identity features are most immediately evident; in skin colour, dress, language, social habits and so on. The linguistic consequences of this kind of tension or conflict may be partly in relation to language variety (e.g. we criticise a group for their language choice or their accent or dialect – see Section 1.3), but there are also textual consequences for the way that we represent such groups or the way in which we construe the world in communicating with them.

1.2.5 Personal conflict

Perhaps the most common kind of conflict in our daily lives comes in the form of personal conflict – with neighbours, family members, co-workers and so on. These conflicts can be short or long-lasting, of course, and may also descend into physical violence in extreme cases. The kinds of structural violence that are entrenched in societies where some groups have lower status by definition can, of course, mean that solutions to personal conflict are only possible by some changes at societal levels. These conflicts are also distinguished by being played out largely in face-to-face (spoken) interaction, which means that pragmatic approaches to the language involved are central (see Section II). Nevertheless, these personal conflicts are also affected by linguistic choice and that means there is always textual meaning which construes the nature of the conflict and the context in certain ways some of which may not be helpful if we want to address the underlying conflict itself.

1.3 The kinds of data that are relevant to conflict at some/all of these levels

Having taken some time to talk through the types and layers of conflict in the last section, here we try to account for the range of text-types that may be involved in any one case.

While it is tempting to think of personal conflict as mainly characterised by face-to-face spoken interaction and international conflict as being carried out in written documents and formal meetings, in fact, there is probably a great deal of personal interaction in the world of international diplomacy (note the amount of discussion of body language when leaders meet in public) and there can be quite formal language involved in personal conflict (for example once mediators or lawyers are involved). We, therefore, refrain from linking text-types to any particular kind of conflict, though some may be more likely than others in particular settings. For example, it is unlikely that newspaper stories will be written about a conflict between spouses unless this becomes so extreme that law enforcement or other authorities become involved.

There is a sense in which all and any type of language use can become involved in a conflict situation. This could range from a tweet or a personal text message to published accounts from a committee or a public speech reported on news media. In the following list, I have tried to account for the nature of the texts involved, without necessarily itemising each sub-genre or text-type there is in human interaction.

1.3.1 Parliamentary debate and official language

The ultimate example of public language, official proceedings in parliaments are usually available in print and broadcast format, sometimes live and often archived online for future viewing or searching (see, for example, the UK's Hansard at https://hansard.parliament.uk/). This means that politicians' words in relation to any issue, but particularly where they impinge on a conflict, are permanent and thus very powerful. The debates that politicians engage in are a very important part of the way in which the public world and social values are created and naturalised. Using a corpus-based study of parliamentary debates in the Latvian and Polish chambers, Chojnicka reflects on this process in relation to changing attitudes towards LGBT people in those countries.

1.3.2 Public texts aimed at influencing their readers

Other public text-types whose *raison d'etre* is to influence attitudes and present the perceived world in particular ways include any public texts (written or spoken) which are explicitly linked to the opinions, policies or attitudes of a person or group. If these texts are explicit in their espousal of particular ideological values, then this is reflected in their propositional content. Such explicit ideologies in texts may be offensive or provocative to some readers, but they are at least accessible to direct challenge. It is also common to find that ideological content is semi-concealed in such texts and this is where a linguistically sophisticated analysis is needed to understand what values are being propagated. Alaghbary investigates the textual meanings inherent in government statements by the US and Egypt on two sides of the conflict in that country and Sahlane and Davies base their analyses on the news editorial, which is also explicitly aimed at influencing the opinions of its readers.

1.3.3 Reporting/commentary/editorial/interview in mass media

The mass media is hugely influential in mediating power in modern society and the variety of genres and text-types across all the conventional media outlets is growing. The recent debates about "fake news" have been ubiquitous in response to the idea that the power of the media is its pervasiveness in promulgating inaccurate or misleading "facts". Perhaps more

insidious, because it is more difficult to identify and challenge, are the naturalised ideologies about people or groups, based on repeated assumptions, that can lead to prejudice and hatred. The ways in which migrants are represented (infesting, flooding, etc.) is just one recent example of this process. Taylor considers changing reporting of migration over time in the *The Times*.

1.3.4 Social media engagement/debate/argument with current issues

The public has a stronger voice these days, largely thanks to social media. While superficially positive, this change in public debate – and the means by which is it carried on – has also led to a blurring of the lines between public and private communication. In itself, this is not problematic, but it can lead to a naturalisation of some very unappealing ideologies which might otherwise have only been expressed in private. The rise in the apparent acceptability of racist, sexist, homophobic and other prejudiced views is partly defended by appeals to "free speech" without a nuanced understanding of what that precious ideal really means in practice in our highly connected world. It is clear that the use of social media to "other", to bully and to whip up hatred is growing and causing more conflict in the world. Millar approaches this topic by looking at the meta-language used in legal and quasi-legal texts and considers how terms like "hate speech" themselves are defined.

1.3.5 Mediated conversations/negotiations between individuals/groups

One of the types of communication event that is perhaps specific to conflict is the mediated conversation. Whether it is a teacher or parent trying to make two children settle their differences; a community mediator helping two sets of neighbours to come to some kind of peace or an international negotiator trying to find common ground between warring parties, these communications are marked by the presence of a "third" party who is officially neutral in relation to the cause of the conflict. The interactive aspects of this kind of communication (who speaks when; what are the "rules" for turn-taking, etc.) are clearly specialised but the textual meaning is the same as in all other communication and can be analysed for the same partially hidden or assumed ideologies. There has been some work on mediated communication in conflict (Stokoe and Sikveland, 2016), but there is a great deal more to do. Although mediation does not feature in this section, Maxwell and Tipton, both in Section IV, discuss communicative aspects of this kind of situation; the metaphors used – and useful – in mediation (Maxwell) and the issues that arise for interpreters in conflict communication, who are presented with many of the same challenges as mediators, though the roles are officially distinct.

1.3.6 Conversational data: between individuals/groups

It should be clear by now that the textual choices made by language producers, in all situations, are subject to the same kinds of ideational processes and that some of these can go beyond ideation to reflecting values (ideologies) of the text producer, whether conscious or not. When two people or groups are involved in a slanging match or a frosty conversation or a continued argument over several episodes there are many features of language that will be prominent, most of them aspects of the interaction itself and affected in many cases by the wider situation and social context (see Sections II–IV). Nevertheless, since there are still words, phrases and sentences being used, these will reflect the worldview and opinions

of the participants. Textual meaning is therefore threaded through all language use, and all conflictual communication, whatever the circumstances. Nahajec (see Chapter 4) looks at the textual choices made in a particular kind of one-to-one interaction, which has potential for conflict, the political interview.

1.4 The approaches available to researchers

Depending on the specific research question being addressed, there are a range of options for researching the textual aspects of communication in conflict situations. The data can be used inductively, whereby a research question is asked and data collected which is then systematically analysed to answer the question. This data may be corpus-based (see Chapters 6, 7 and 8) or use smaller amounts of specific data analysed qualitatively (see Chapter 5). Other approaches seen in this section may be seen as more deductive, testing a hypothesis or proposing a theoretical refinement by searching for cases which confirm or challenge the hypothesis/proposal (see Chapters 2, 3 and 4). In these latter cases, the rigour in the research process is partly in the structure of its argument, complemented by the explanatory and illustrative examples from data sought out to test the ideas.

1.5 Introducing the chapters in Section I

This chapter has laid the background for the following chapters, which range over the conflict levels, text-types and approaches discussed above. There are, of course, many permutations that are not represented here, but these chapters are indicative of the scope for much more work in this field, as well as demonstrating that much work already completed in CDA, Critical Stylistics and Corpus Linguistics (as well as combinations of these) is relevant to conflict, whether or not it has presented itself in this way.

In Chapter 2, Sahlane uses argumentation theory and analysis based on rhetorical frameworks to examine op-ed press items (editorials and other opinion pieces) covering the prelude to the 2003 Iraq War. Sahlane critiques the fallacious use of argumentation strategies in this data that are not wrong in themselves but are "dangerously prone to abuse". The following three chapters (3–5) are based on a critical stylistic view of textual meaning. Davies argues that news discourse is partly responsible for creating conflict through its exaggeration of the binary. His data comes from editorials used during the UK's general election campaigns of 2010 and 2015 and his focus is on a single TCF, that of constructed opposition. Nahajec considers the textual practice of another TCF, negation, and its effect in conflict situations. Using examples from political interviews, she argues that there are three ways that negation can contribute to conflict: i) in enacting conflict between speakers; ii) in representing people and ideas; and iii) in heightening fears and tensions in conflict contexts. Alaghbary takes a broader Critical Stylistic view of two conflicting statements on the removal from office of President Morsy of Egypt. The statements are from US President Obama and the Egyptian Supreme Council of Armed Forces. Alaghbary considers the role of language in naturalising ideologies and the difference between categorical statements from the military government and Obama's modalised or provisional "truth".

The remaining chapters in this section (6–8) approach their topics through (critical) discourse approaches combined with corpus methods. Chojincka examines the construction of ideological views of homosexuality in Latvian and Polish parliamentary debates from 1994 to 2013. The chapter considers the structural violence which arises from representation leading to the normalisation of negative ideologies characterising homosexuality. Changes in

parliamentary references/discussion over time are examined and the tendency to connect homosexuality with Leftist politics (by the Right) is critiqued. Taylor examines the naming practices of reporting on forced migration in *The Times* newspaper. In particular, the naming of the participants in the process of forced migration is shown to have potentially damaging consequences for the people forced from their homes. Finally, Millar takes a slightly different stance, examining official documents and legal discussion to see how the phenomenon of "Hate speech" is defined and used. She shows that although popular in political policy-making and speeches, the term is not used in laws themselves. She also demonstrates the power of a term (which has no agreed definition) to become reified through naming in conflicts at different (geographical/political) levels from global to national.

1.6 What we might gain from textual analysis of conflict-related text

It may already be evident that careful and systematic scrutiny of the language used in or related to conflict can demonstrate where prejudices arise, how stereotypes are naturalised and when opinions are entrenched. However, it is perhaps worth finishing this chapter with some suggestions as to how raising awareness of textual meaning could be of value in a society aiming to minimise conflict at all levels.

First, taking time to demonstrate how ideologically loaded text and argumentation work can help to raise the levels of critical language awareness in the general population. Although all human beings, including text linguists, can be carried away by emotive reactions to texts at times, there is scope for all of us to learn to react less instinctively and find a more measured way to counter the ideological assumptions being made in the texts we encounter.

Second, there is potential for adaptation amongst those involved in conflict to adapt their own linguistic behaviour or at the least be able to analyse what kinds of textual meaning they have created in their language use. This kind of self-awareness, informed by linguistic knowledge, would take time to develop into more automatic behavioural traits, but is not impossible to achieve, it seems to us.

Finally, perhaps the best and most achievable outcome from an increased awareness of the effects of our textual choices would be an improved level of public (and private) debate in which people can respond to assumed ideologies by challenging them directly and recognising their own naturalised assumptions for what they are. Politicians already have some ability in this regard, but it earns them only a reputation for avoiding answering questions. To be fair to them, that is usually because the questions they face contain traps created by the very textual features that this chapter has been discussing.

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2

Discursive (re)construction of the prelude to the 2003 Iraq War in op/ed press

Dialectics of argument and rhetoric

Ahmed Sahlane

2.1 Introduction

Operation Iraqi Freedom marked not only the US's second incursion into Iraq in just over a decade but also an unprecedented alignment of the media with the interests of the US government. As in the First Gulf War (1991), the desirability of attacking Iraq became increasingly tied up with human rights abuses committed by Saddam Hussein (the ex-president of Iraq, 1979–2003). Though the Bush run-up to war has generated some frame analysis and agenda-setting research (e.g. Degano, 2007; Nicolaev and Porpora, 2007; Porpora and Nicolaev, 2008), few studies have investigated the prelude to the Iraq War debate from a critical discourse perspective and across different media contexts (e.g. Chang and Mehan, 2008; Sahlane, 2012, 2013, 2015; Wilson, Sahlane, and Somerville, 2012). The present study is an attempt to fill this gap by addressing the role of language in shaping the way the 2003 Iraq crisis unfolded and remained unresolved.

I first discuss the data used. Then, I show how *argumentum ad hominem* (personal abuse aimed at preventing the opponent from advancing his standpoint) and argument from pity were strategically deployed in pro-war argument in a way that provided blinkers that prevented the American–British public from viewing the Iraqi conflict from different perspectives (silenced rebuttals). Argument from pity resorts to emotional appeal (*argumentum ad misericordiam*) "either to put pressure on the audience or to sway the audience in the protagonist's favour" (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1992, p.139). *Argumentum ad misericordiam* consists of "unjustifiably appealing for compassion and empathy in cases where a specific situation of serious difficulties, crisis or plight intended to evoke compassion and to win an antagonist over to one's side is faked or pretended" (Reisigl and Wodak, 2001, p.72). Such emotional appeals in argument are fallacious when the arguer fails to substantiate his standpoint through solid and relevant evidence. The two fallacies listed above can be classified as argumentative moves that are not intrinsically wrong but are "dangerously prone to abuse" (Jacobs, 2002, p.119). Finally, I conclude by highlighting the important findings of the study.

2.2 Sample materials and methods

Mass media reflect the sociopolitical and cultural-ideological environment they operate in. While French journalism has always emphasised the need to analyse facts and educate (inter)national public opinion rather than merely *report* facts (Berkowitz and Eko, 2007, p.781), American journalism values balanced exposition of the different positions of the contending parties in a conflict, without getting involved in the analysis of the hard facts of political disputes. Hence, US journalists have become more dependent on official sources for information, and they consequently help in the framing of sociopolitical issues. While the French (and Arab) media can be characterised as fitting within the "Mediterranean" or "polarised" model, the US–British media belong to the "North Atlantic" or "liberal" model (Hallin and Mancini, 2004). In other words, the US–British press (which is not state-owned or subsidised) is supposed to be more independent, neutral and information-oriented while state support for the French press (and across Europe) "is justified as a measure to promote political pluralism" (Benson and Hallin, 2007, p.43). However, sometimes the US media "is forced to move closer to the state in order to maintain its legitimacy and authority" (ibid.) and promote its commercial self-interest. In this sense, they face a more challenging task – that of providing a wide range of perspectives and acting as a "watchdog" of the government's policies (Hallin and Mancini, 2004, p.189). Similarly, the British press has to "compete nationally for readers who are reached primarily via daily sales rather than subscriptions" (ibid., p.42). Consequently, to account for the diverse needs of its readership, "the British press is forced to cover politics in a highly critical, sensational fashion" (ibid.). As British newspapers are financially independent of political parties, they tend to display a significant degree of political pluralism by allowing for more diverse viewpoints and alternative voices in their coverage of international affairs (Hallin and Mancini, 2004).

2.2.1 Newspaper sample

The opinion and editorial (op/ed) articles used in this study were retrieved from six prominent daily broadsheet newspapers (see Table 2.1). Two papers from each Western country (France, the UK and the US) were selected, one known as being "conservative" (*Le Figaro, The Times* and *The Washington Post*, respectively) and the other as being "liberal" (*Le Monde*, *The Guardian* and *The New York Times*). In addition, *Al-Ahram Weekly* was selected as a major quality English newspaper from the Arab world. These newspapers are chosen because they are often considered representative of the mediated public sphere.

Table 2.1 Newspaper sample

Paper	Political leaning	Position	Articles
The New York Times	Liberal	Pro-war	362
The Washington Post	Conservative	Pro-war	174
The Times	Conservative	Pro-war	135
The Guardian	Liberal	Anti-war	139
Le Monde	Liberal	Anti-war	109
Le Figaro	Conservative	Anti-war	237
Al-Ahram Weekly	Liberal	Anti-war	158

The *New York Times* (*NYT*) is supposed to be the most "literate", "comprehensive" and "magisterial" of US newspapers; it is the US "paper of record" for international news reporting and the "guardian of oppositional news practices" (Goss, 2002, p.84). Together with *NYT*, *The Washington Post* (*WP*) is incontestably the main elite press source for the US foreign policy decision-makers. However, *WP* was the most hawkish major daily US newspaper in its adoption of a clear pro-war stance during the prelude to the US-led invasion of Iraq in March 2003 (Sahlane, 2012). It systematically silenced or downplayed criticism of the Bush administration's rush to war (ibid.).

Similarly, *The Times* is regarded as the newspaper of record and the "organ of the British establishment" in view of its "conservative political allegiance" (Cameron, 1996, pp.318–20). While *The Times* offered strong support for the US-led war on Iraq, *The Guardian* forcefully opposed it. *The Guardian*, which draws its readership mostly from educated, higher socioeconomic classes, has online popularity because of its support for liberal causes. Its editorials demonstrated a clear anti-war stance during the lead-up to the 2003 Iraq invasion. However, its coverage changed in favour of the war once the British troops were on the battlefield (Wells, 2007).

On the other hand, *Le Monde* is selected because it is a newspaper of record of leftist/Gaullist outlook; it is a "sober paper; there are few 'soundbites', no trace of populism. Texts are long, dense and demand high levels of literacy from the reader" (Grundmann et al., 2000, p.306). Likewise, *Le Figaro* demonstrates an outstanding coverage of international political affairs; its opposition to the Iraq War was very clear in its editorials (Sahlane, 2015). The inclusion of the English-language weekly paper *Al- Ahram Weekly* was partly motivated by its adoption of a Western style and its broader educated pan-Arab audience.

2.2.2 Methods of analysis

Using the keyword "Iraq (editorial)" on a Web-version Lexis Nexis search, the current study has identified 362 *NYT* and 174 *WP* op/ed articles. Searches using "Iraq (editorial or comment)" yielded 135 op/ed and feature articles from *The Times* and 139 *Guardian* op/ed articles from the selected period (1 February to 20 March 2003). Sunday editions were excluded. As regards the French newspapers, *Le Monde* ("Saddam") yielded 695 articles while *Le Figaro* ("Irak") generated 237 articles (31 of which were "debates and opinions"). For *Le Monde*, the analysis mainly targeted sections that were unsigned or written by guest academics or regular op/ed writers. It should be noted that "French newspapers often publish guest opinion articles as well as official editorials on their front pages" (Benson and Hallin, 2007, p.31). The op/ed articles coded as mixed in the theme category or irrelevant were excluded, leaving a total of 109 op/ed articles to be examined. On the other hand, *Al-Ahram Weekly* data contained 158 articles concerning the same range of topics that were published in the other papers and in the same period. However, owing to space restrictions, my focus will be on "typical" pro-war arguments in US–British op/eds and counterarguments (rebuttals) will be provided from other anti-war papers as deemed useful.

The unit of analysis is the individual op/ed. "Op/eds" here refers to both editorials and opinion pieces. Editorials are "unsigned and represent the position of the publication" and opinion pieces are "signed" and "represent the opinion of an individual, a regular, or a guest columnist" (Nikolaev and Porpora, 2007, p.7). Op/eds are predominantly in argument mode and they are schematically structured in that they first define the situation, then summarise the news event and finally evaluate the given situation on the basis of which

recommendations for a course of action are highlighted. The analysis of the op/ed articles is carried out in two stages. First, argumentative strategies that have the potential to impart ideological meaning are identified. Then, an analysis of selected texts is carried out to illustrate the type of fallacious arguments that the US–British mainstream op/ed discussants advanced in their debate of the legality of the potential US-led war on Iraq. The sampled op/ed texts will be largely presented as illustrative of US–British op/ed discursive practices vis-à-vis the looming Iraq conflict.

In a pragma-dialectical approach, the reconstruction of argumentative exchange involves a systematic interpretation of the discourse in the light of the pragma-dialectical objective (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1984). The discourse analyst needs to closely examine actual utterances and their underlying interactive and communicative functions. Therefore, the newspaper op/ed argumentation about Iraq is "reconstructed" as a "critical discussion" aimed at a "rational" resolution of a difference of opinion (Van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1984). This reconstruction was guided by the macro-structure of the argumentation process, i.e. the contextual situation in which the argumentative moves are embedded. In other words, the analyst reflected upon the broader circumstances that shaped the unfolding of the Iraq conflict. In this sense, both the verbal indicators and the contextual information served as clues for detecting the type of complex argumentation schemes used by the disputants. In addition, only those elements that are verbally expressed (externalisation) and/or implied from unstated commitments by the participants were considered, contingent upon the overall macro-structure of the argumentative discourse (i.e. the participants' communicative, interactive and strategic goals).

The present study assumes that all representations of social events are polysemic and intertextual in that discourse enters into a synchronic and diachronic relationship with other co-occurring communicative events. For example, the type of arguments put forward by pro-Iraq War op/ed discussants intertextually resonated with the Bush administration's "war on terror" rhetoric in an uncritical way that created a form of indexical association through "recontextualisation" (Sahlane, 2012). More interestingly, language should be seen as a "socially and historically situated mode of action" in that "it is socially shaped, but it is also socially shaping, or constitutive" (Fairclough, 1995, p.131). The aim of this chapter is to show how ideology may manifest itself in discourse through the use of argumentative manoeuvring strategies that can be geared to manipulate meaning construction.

2.3 The function of *ad hominem* fallacies in argumentation

Pragma-dialecticians define "argumentation" as a communicative encounter in a context of controversy, whose main goal is to resolve a difference of opinion in a rational way (i.e. based solely on the merit of the arguments put forward). Arguers might tacitly resort to "strategic manoeuvring" when they "attempt to exploit the opportunities afforded by the dialectical situation for steering the discourse rhetorically in the direction that serves their own interests best" (Van Eemeren and Houtlosser, 1999, pp.481–2). Effective argumentation should involve taking a stance that is morally worthy (ethos), providing sound evidence in support of argument (logos) and *legitimately* appealing to the audience's emotions (pathos). However, strategic manoeuvring may lead to manipulative practices such as (a) exploiting the "topic potential" by directing discussion to the topics that are easiest to handle (e.g. filtering information and keeping argumentation within the bounds of "acceptable" premises), (b) appealing to the audience's emotions to gain their sympathy for a

preferred stance and (c) using effective presentational devices (e.g. rhetorical questions, metaphor, analogy, loaded expressions, strategic ambiguity) to frame contentious issues from a certain perspective (Van Eemeren and Houtlosser, 1999, p.484). In other words, when a deficient "strategic move" in an argumentative exchange hinders the rational resolution of a disagreement (e.g. false witness testimony, *ad hominem* arguments), a "fallacy" is said to be committed (van Eemeren and Grootendorst, 1984). Therefore, an interplay of ethos and pathos, seeking to enhance the arguer's standpoint, might be manipulative, as the following sections demonstrate.

2.3.1 *Argumentum* ad hominem*: strategies of character attack*

An *ad hominem* fallacy occurs when an interactant resorts to *irrelevant*[1] personal abuse of an opponent instead of addressing his argument. Such a defamation strategy can also involve discrediting moves that cast doubt on the opponent's character by portraying them as inconsistent (*circumstantial ad hominem*) or biased, in order to disqualify them as legitimate interlocutors in a rational dialogue (*poisoning the well*). Therefore, in what follows, *ad hominem* arguments are treated as dialogical moves (speech acts) aimed at achieving "rhetorical" goals.

2.3.2 *Direct (abusive)* ad hominem

Personal attack is a manoeuvring strategy that calls into question the character, sincerity and credibility of the other party instead of countering their standpoint. Its function is to ridicule the opponent. Hence, it violates proper rules of social exchange (i.e. politeness), as illustrated below:

> [M]any elements of the Democratic Party, including most of its base and many of its most conspicuous leaders, seem **deranged, unhinged by the toxic fumes of hatred and contempt they emit for the president** […] they consider ignorant.
>
> *(Will,* WP*, 19 March 2003)*

> It [France] was given its permanent seat on the Security Council to preserve the fiction that heroic France was part of the great anti-Nazi alliance rather than **a country that surrendered and collaborated** […] France spent the entire 1990s **weakening sanctions and eviscerating the inspections regime** as a way to end the containment of Iraq. France is doing this to contain the United States.
>
> *(Krauthammer,* WP*, 28 February 2003)*

> [Short's "not in my name" position is] more a slogan of disengaged individuals who are **opting out of the political battle** than of those fighting for an alternative. So, **our moral Cabinet minister** ends up **hiding behind the bogus authority of the UN**, waiting for **unelected, unaccountable apparatchiks such as Hans Blix and Kofi Annan** to pass judgment on Iraq before she can give the bombers her blessing.
>
> *(Hume,* The Times*, 13 March 2003)*

US Democrats, British labour politicians and French and UN leaders are negatively portrayed. While "martial virtues" were associated with American jingoistic masculinity, opposition to war and the advocating of diplomacy became a form of cowardice, dereliction of

responsibility, defeatism and the pursuit of prudential self-interest. For example, Clare Short (the then-secretary of state for international development, who resigned from Tony Blair's government in opposition to the 2003 Iraq War) was portrayed as "disloyal Ms Short" (*The Times*, 11 March 2003), "the people's peacenik" whose "angry rebel routine boosts her crafted PR image as the conscience of the Labour Party in an otherwise sinful world" and won her the title of "Saint Clare of Ladywood". She also sounded "as if she were a spokesman for Greenpeace" (Hume, *The Times*, 13 March 2003). "Her outburst on Iraq is less a statement about the war than about Clare Short" (ibid.), and her "brave stands against government policy" are fake as they tend to "bomb soft targets such as […] a war without UN support" so that "she can ride a wave of public sympathy" (ibid.).

   The problem with character evidence is that it is a mere strategic manoeuvre to discredit the opponent in the eyes of a third-party audience. This *ad hominem* argument can be represented as follows (Walton, 2004, p.361):

> Clare Short is unfit to engage in a dialogue about Iraq War because of her political conduct ("disloyal", "self-important", "irresponsible") and her dialogical propensity to get "angry" and rebellious.
>   **Therefore**, Short's "not in my name" stance over Iraq should not be accepted as it is a mere "slogan" of political disengagement and partisan "betrayal".

2.3.3 *Circumstantial* ad hominem

Circumstantial ad hominem is a "form of argument […] used by one party to infer that the other is committed to a certain proposition, based on what the other has said or done in the past" (Walton, 2004, p.362). Robin Cook's case can provide a useful illustration of this fallacy that combines argument from commitment and personal attack. Robin Cook (the former British Labour Foreign Secretary, who resigned from Tony Blair's Cabinet over the 2003 Iraq War) convincingly argued that "Iraq probably has no weapons of mass destruction" (*The Guardian*, 18 March 2003).[2] Besides, in the 1980s, "the US sold Saddam the anthrax agents and the then British government built his chemical and munitions factories" (ibid.). Therefore, he argued:

> Why is it **now** so **urgent** that we should take military action to disarm a military capacity that has been there for 20 years and which **we helped to create**? And why is it necessary to resort to war **this week** while Saddam's ambition to complete his weapons programme is frustrated by the presence of UN inspectors? […] If we believe in an international community based on binding rules and institutions, we cannot simply set them aside when they produce results that are inconvenient to us.
>
> *(Cook,* The Guardian*, 18 March 2003)*

William Rees-Mogg (former editor of *The Times* and former vice-chairman of the BBC) countered Cook's anti-war position by claiming that:

> Kosovo is the nearest comparable case to Iraq. NATO acted without UN approval on the grounds that Milosevic's conduct was a crime against humanity […] That is a problem […] for Robin Cook, who was Foreign Secretary at the time […] **If Kosovo was legal, Iraq will be legal as well**.
>
> *(*The Times*, 17 March 2003)*

Rees-Mogg's appeal to ethos is a manoeuvring strategy that can be schematised as follows (Walton, 2004, p.364):

> *a* (Cook) advocates argument α ("why rush to war now?"), which has proposition *A* ("invading Iraq without a UN mandate is illegal") as its conclusion.
>
> **But** Cook has agreed to the bombing of Kosovo without UN backing when he was the British foreign Minister, which implies that he is personally committed to not-*A* ("If Kosovo was legal, Iraq will be legal as well").
>
> **Therefore**, Cook has a defect in ethical character (he is inconsistent and hypocritical) and thus Cook's argument ("invading Iraq without UN authorisation is illegal") should be retracted because it violates the rules of ethical conduct (a discussant should honour his past commitments).
>
> **Silenced rebuttal**: Why has [the bombing of Iraq] become so much more **pressing** than any other [humanitarian concern] that [the US] should command a budget four times the size of America's entire annual spending on overseas aid? (Monbiot, 2003).[3]

Rees-Mogg's ethical appeal seeks to refute Cook's anti-war position in an illegitimate way. First, the analogical presumption that Iraq and Bosnia were similar is yet to be evidenced (burden shift strategy): "Iraq is not a Kosovo, where ethnic cleansing was an immediate, urgent horror or a fledgling East Timor, crying out for external assistance" (Tisdall, 2003). Besides, the goal of the US invasion of Iraq might be motivated by the need "to change social and economic relations by military force in favour of the 'Master Race' of the day" (Amin, 2003). Therefore, though personal traits might be valid attacks on an opponent's credibility, character evidence might become problematic when used to silence others' viewpoints. More interestingly, even if the character attack is retracted, the damage to the opponent's credibility may nonetheless persist. The irreparability of the damage is even more serious in the "poisoning the well" *ad hominem* (Walton, 2006).

2.3.4 The "poisoning the well" ad hominem

The deployment of culpabilisation strategies was a very crucial Manichean "rhetoric" to delegitimise the religious leaders' anti-war position. During Bush's preparations for war, "church leaders have warned of the unpredictable and potentially disastrous consequences of war against Iraq – massive civilian casualties, a precedent for preemptive war, further destabilisation of the Middle East and the fueling of more terrorism" (Wallis and Cohen, 2003). For example, Tincq pointed out that:

> Opposition to war on Iraq is contagious in the churches, which view attacking Iraq as **politically and morally unacceptable** […] The sanctions already killed hundreds of thousands of Iraqi civilians. Iraq does not need bombs or missiles; what it (desperately) needs is moral, political, and economic support.
>
> *(*Le Monde*, 2003 – translation mine)*

Their anti-war stance brought the religious leaders much criticism in mainstream media. For example, it was claimed that "a list of more than 573 priests" who were "accused of abusing minors since 1976" (Goodstein, 2002) were born radicals as they also opposed the Vietnam War. Instead of addressing their "immoral" scandals, these clerics chose to "turn to

writing anti-war policy" (ibid.). A conspiracy thesis was also invoked in that any opposition to war was characterised as mere "anti-American/Israel" sentiment (Amos, 2003; Friedman, 2003). Besides, the French and Russian UN veto threats were characterised as "largely driven by economic interests in Saddam's continuance in power" (Safire, 2003). After all, the UN itself "has rarely risen above being a mere bazaar for the trading of interests between major powers" (Hoagland, 2003).

In the same vein, referring to the verbal clash between Izzat Ibrahim (the former right-hand man to Saddam Hussein) and Al-Ahmed (the Kuwaiti representative to the Organisation of the Islamic Conference) about the need for Saddam to resign to avert war, Hoagland argued that "Americans and Europeans dismiss the insults and accusations that Arab leaders hurl at one another at public gatherings and summits as angry and even irrational outbursts" (*Washington Post*, 2003). Hence, as Tony Blair (Prime Minister for the UK from 1997 to 2007) put it, "the only persuasive power to which Saddam responds is 250,000 allied troops on his doorstep" (*The Guardian*, 2003). This "perceived Arab tendency towards verbosity and antagonistic dispute is the opposite of self-ascribed European norms of negotiation, consensus and rational dialogue" (Blommaert and Verschueren, 1998, p.19). As a Westerner, Hoagland, a columnist for *The Washington Post* and a Pulitzer Prize winner in 1991 for his op/eds on the lead-up to the Gulf War, deployed rhetorical strategies "whereby constructions of personal subjective cultural opinion are transformed into cultural realities" (Shi-Xu, 1997, p.182) about the Arab Other (*secundum quid* fallacy), who is categorised as rationally inferior. Iraqis were characterised as "political minors who are in need of a regime change and/or are unable to carry one out" (Youssef, 2008, p.160). However, as Van Dijk points out:

> Ideological opinions **selectively invoke and hide history** […] 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.
> *(van Dijk, 1998, pp.60–1)*

Similarly, Charles Krauthammer (a political columnist for *Washington Post*, a Fox News commentator and a Pulitzer Prize winner for Commentary in 1987) argued that it would be ridiculous to ask for "the permission of Guinea to risk the lives of American soldiers to rid the world – and the long-suffering Iraqi people – of a particularly vicious and dangerous tyrant" (*WP*, 2003). As Bush put it, "when it comes to our security, we really don't need anybody's permission" (quoted in McGrory, 2003) because "[t]he course of this nation does not depend on the decisions of others" (*WP*, 2003). Therefore, this "agonistic combat" creates an "epistemic context" of "radical incommensurability" and "moral alienation" (Jacobs, 1989, p.359) which reserves epistemic privileges for pro-war arguers and excludes the other party. This "poisoning of the well" *ad hominem* can be schematised as follows (Walton, 2006, p.289):

> *a* (Cook, Short, Russia, Guinea, US democratic party, UN, Arab and 'Old Europe' leaders, the clergy, etc.) have argued for a thesis *A* (a US invasion of Iraq would be an unprovoked war of aggression against a sovereign Arab state).
>
> **But** *a* belong to or is affiliated with groups *Gs* (far left radicals, Gaullist nationalists, violent communists, African dictators, rogue Arab regimes, peacenik paedophiles, etc.).
>
> It is known that such groups (Gs) are special-interest partisan groups that take up a biased (dogmatic, prejudiced, irrational, fanatic, anti-American/Semitic, "pacifist", etc.) quarrelling attitude in pushing exclusively for their prejudiced views.

Therefore one cannot engage in a reasoned dialogue over Iraq (or any other ethical/ political issue) with any members of these *Gs*, and **hence** the arguments of *a* for *A* do not deserve to be taken seriously.

In other words, "It is futile to try to reason with passionate marchers waving signs proclaiming that America's motives are to conquer the world and expend blood for oil. Nor should we waste more precious time trying to beg or buy moral approval from France or Russia, their UN veto threats largely driven by economic interests in Saddam's continuance in power" (Safire, 2003).

Ad hominem arguments are faulty once they try to prevent the other party from advancing their standpoints by casting doubt on their character and/or circumstances. Attributing certain personality traits to a person or a group of people to exclude them from taking part in a rational dialogue is illegitimate, especially when *ad hominem* is deliberately used with a rhetorical intent to divert attention from the core issues at hand. For example, instead of addressing the illegality of the US's pending attacks on Iraq, pro-war arguers strategically shifted discussion to irrelevant issues (e.g. the character of anti-war political actors, conspiracy theories). The epistemic harm caused by *ad hominem* fallacy can extend to the whole out-group beyond the individual engaged in the dialogue. Such epistemic injustice can also be perpetuated through media cultivation of false witness accounts.

2.4 Media appeal to witness testimony as strategic manoeuvring

During the 2003 Iraq War, editorial perspectivation of news was very clear in the way mainstream media reframed the US invasion of Iraq as a "necessary" and "benign" "war of liberation". For example, television news reporters "tend to portray [Iraqi] women as the embodiment of sadness, despair [and] helplessness" (Lipson, 2009, p.152). Iraqi women were also depicted as "immobile subjects" (the only active role given to Iraqi women is their "begging" for water from the coalition forces) and "objects to be seen" (ibid.). This stereotypical portrayal was meant to justify the US invasion as a war to liberate Iraqi women. More seriously, the BBC suppressed "the emotional, ethical and political issues that lie behind the bombardment of Baghdad" (Chouliaraki, 2005, p.147). This "detached overview" reconstructed the US bombing of the Iraqi capital "not as a scene of suffering", but as "a site of intense military action without agency", "full of spectacularity and striking action" (ibid., p.153). Reports were "free of bloodshed, dissent and diplomacy but full of exciting weaponry, splashy graphics and heroic soldiers" (Aday et al., 2005, p.18). Likewise, *The Guardian* featured images of innocent Iraqi children "standing on an abandoned Iraqi tank" and "giving the victory salute" under the "protecting gaze of a soldier" (ibid.). Triumphalist images of "children taking food parcels from the back of a military truck" (Wells, 2007, p.62) erased the sociopolitical context of the Iraqi conflict by rendering the Iraqi children's suffering attributable to parental "neglect rather than attack" (ibid., p.66).

This sanitised depiction of the 2003 Iraq War in Western mainstream media was challenged by the anti-war argument. For example, *The Daily Mirror*'s iconography confronted the readers with the "brutal realities of the invasion" (Wells, 2007, p.69). Equally, in the Greek press, the gaze of a wounded child in a photograph entitled "The soundless cry of a child" functioned as "a metonym of the Iraqi people looking directly towards the (western) readers" as if telling them "'I dare you' (to care, to respond), backed up with the 'Shame on you' (for refusing) performative speech act" (Kostantinidou, 2008, p.152). Hence, "its

narrative was one of shame about what was being done 'in our name'" (ibid., p.68). Another iconic photo(story) was that of Ali Ismail Abbas, the 12-year-old Iraqi child who lost 16 family members and was maimed for life by a US missile attack on his home. He was flown to the UK for specialised medical treatment. The global infotainment media reframed Ali's tragedy as a "rescue" story (ibid.) by evoking "liberal narratives of compensation and heal-ing […] to neutralise the iconic photograph's sense of guilt" (Hariman and Lucaites, 2003, pp.49–50).

Therefore, while the act of witnessing is intimately bound up with suffering, it remains a conflict-ridden discursive act in that "the narrator conveys biased selections based on inter-pretations and conveys evaluations that guide an audience in specific directions" (Van den Hoven, 2015, pp.169–70). This performative aspect of media witnessing is crucial in that arguments from pathos do not merely reflect reality, but they actively seek to shape it, as the data of the present study demonstrate below:

> Based on Iraqi government figures, UNICEF estimates that **containment** kills roughly 5,000 Iraqi babies (**children under 5 years of age**) every month, or 60,000 per year […] Saddam Hussein is 65; containing him for another 10 years condemns at least another 360,000 Iraqis to death. Of these, 240,000 will be children under 5.
>
> *(Mead, 2003)*

> Men were dropped into [industrial shredders] and we were again made to watch. Sometimes they went in head first and died quickly. Sometimes they went in feet first and died screaming. It was horrible. **I saw 30 people die like this**. Their remains would be placed in plastic bags and we were told they would be used as fish food […] On one occasion, I saw Qusay [President Saddam Hussein's youngest son] personally super-vise these murders.
>
> *(Clwyd, 2003)*

> Another witness **told us** about practices of the security services towards women: "**Women** were suspended by their hair as their families watched; men were forced to watch as their **wives were raped** […] **women were suspended by their legs** while they were menstruating until their periods were over, a procedure designed to cause **humiliation**".
>
> *(Clwyd, 2003)*

> Thousands [of Bosnian Muslims] died. They were killed individually in battle and indi-vidually in latter-day **concentration camps**. They were murdered by the hundreds in **massacres**. **Women were raped**. Unlike the **Holocaust**, the world could not pretend ignorance. **We all knew** what was happening at Srebrenica in July 1995.
>
> *(Cohen, 2003)*

> On the second day of the invasion [of Kuwait], **I saw a woman**, minutes after she had been **raped** by a member of the Republican Guard.
>
> *(Ewald, 2003)*

> many more [Kuwaitis] had been brutalized […] **ritualistically humiliated** […] robbed, beaten, **raped**, tortured. Some of the subjugation, **rape** and torture had been profes-sional: the work of Iraq's terrible special security units […] **I watched** one **torture**

victim, a big, strong man, being interviewed in the place of his torture by a BBC television crew – weeping and weeping, but absolutely silently, as he told the story.

(Kelly, 2003)

First, Walter Russell Mead (then serving as the Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for US Foreign Policy), in his *WP* op/ed "Deadlier than war", contended that 12 years of US-backed "genocidal sanctions"[4] (1991–2003) had been detrimental for the innocent Iraqi civilians. Then, he fallaciously argued that invading Iraq to effect a regime change would be the only morally acceptable solution because the suffering that the US might inflict upon the innocent Iraqi people ("collateral damage") would be less dreadful than that which would be forestalled. He tried to enhance the "credibility" of his position through the citation of authority sources, such as UNICEF and Iraqi government figures (*argumentum verecundiam*). This "manoeuvring strategy", however, is an attempt to use the other party's data (as already agreed facts) to his own advantage.

Similarly, Ann Clwyd (a Welsh Labour Party MP for Cynon Valley since 1984), in her opinion piece "See men shredded, then say you don't back war", argued that Blair's call for arms against Iraq was justified, based on the human rightist argument she espoused and the presumption that her witnesses are "truthful" beyond reasonable doubt. Hence, her use of direct speech might be motivated by the need to leave a back door open for plausible deniability (Walton, 1996b) (she can easily retract any claim that cannot be conclusively defended) by shifting the burden of responsibility (witnesses were made to "swear that their statements are true and sign them") (Clwyd, 2003). Though "compassion" is a desirable virtue, acting solely based on unverified witness testimonies might lead to simplistic conclusions. She also argued that "[Saddam's] evil, fascist regime must come to an end. With or without the help of the Security Council, and with or without the backing of the Labour Party in the House of Commons" (Clwyd, 2003). Her description of how Saddam fed dissidents "feet first" into industrial shredders evokes human abuses detailed in Tony's Blair's infamous "dodgy" dossier on Iraq. In other words, Clwyd "strategically" introduced into her argument "presuppositions that may not be true at all" (van Dijk, 1998, p.34), but that are "ideologically" coherent with regards to the pro-war stance she was supposed to defend. Such pragmatic presuppositions are very instrumental in political persuasion in that they:

> regulate the way authors or speakers take their (envisaged) audience into account by attuning their formulations and arguments to the kind of views they implicitly suppose this audience to endorse. Consequently, pragmatic presuppositions reflect not so much the authors' hidden opinions, but rather such opinions as they expect from their readership.

(Hemrica and Heyting, 2004, p.451)

Clwyd invoked feelings of pity to induce immediate military action against Iraq, even when she knew that her claim was not relevant to her conclusion: if all dictators should be toppled, the world would turn into a perpetual battlefield. Besides, "it is a bit problematic to be invoking international law and insisting on your right to ignore it at the same time, in the same cause and with the same righteous indignation" (Kinsley, 2003). "Civilised norms of global behaviour" say that "Thou shalt not use military force without the approval of the Security Council – even if thou art the United States of America" (ibid.).

Cohen's witnessing narrative is meant to shock and evoke moral outrage. It conveys a very powerful "never again" instrumental moralism (Nazification strategy) by rendering the

failure to act as complicity. Recourse to guilt technique has a persuasive force as it enlists the emotional involvement of the readers, who are themselves agentivised, through the ethical claim that "we" should all share responsibility for remembrance and human rights abuse prevention (*inclusion* strategy). However, Cohen's argument is based on "presumptive appeal to a precedent [Bosnia], to plead for exemption from the [UN] established rule" (Walton, 1996a, p.94). His shame appeal forewarns the international community and incurs an obligation to assume the moral responsibility of inaction. Cohen's appeal to shame argument can be reconstructed as follows (Manolescu, 2007, p.380):

> **If** you (the international community) do *A* (tolerate Saddam's repression of Iraqis), "shame on you". Feeling shame is undesirable (and I dare you to act responsibly).
> **But**, the only way to assume your moral obligation and prevent shameful conduct (as in Bosnia) is to do *A* (support Bush's plan to effect a regime change in Iraq).
> **Therefore**, you ought to do *A*.

Ewald's testimony was meant to stress the authoritative role of journalistic eye-witnessing and create the effect of truth (veracity) to validate his pro-war stance (e.g. "I saw a woman, minutes after she had been raped"). The Ba'th regime's alleged sexual atrocities are rendered factual by the appropriation of the voice of a Western insider-narrator (in his capacity as a reporter). More importantly, he communicates not only his knowledge of the event (spatio-temporal context, circumstance, causality, persecutor-victim relations, etc.) but also his emotional reaction to the traumatic incident. Therefore, his aim is to elicit affective response from readers, who are invited to step beyond the role of complicit passive spectators and take public action to stop the depicted atrocities.

However, "a handful of women whom [Al-Ali] interviewed shortly after the invasion vehemently denied the atrocities committed against Kurds by the Iraqi regime and Iraqi soldiers" (Al-Ali, 2016, p.8). Similarly, the widely publicised "incubator" testimony by the 15-year-old Kuwaiti girl, Nayirah (Kuwaiti premature babies dumped out of the incubators by Iraqi troops), that helped build support for the 1991 Iraq War turned out to be a fabrication (Walton, 1995, p.771). Had the identity of Nayirah been disclosed (a member of the Kuwaiti royal family), her testimony could have been eroded by her motivation as a witness (though Bush could still have invaded Iraq). The choice of witnesses is not always innocent. For instance, while Bakri chose Palestinian victims in his documentary film to bear witness to the Israeli attacks on Jenin on 3 April 2002, Shalev recounted the conflict from the perspective of Israeli soldiers (wearing civil clothes and outside the battlefield) and Palestinians (wearing dark masks and on the location of the attacks) (Ashuri and Pinchevski, 2009, p.152).

Kelly's appeal to "argument from witness testimony" brings into play proof to expound the arguer's attempt to sell war to the British public. Witness testimonies are invested with the power to invoke an emotional response as they invite the audience to reflect upon the traumas of others who are suffering. This "Western experience-as-proof" strategy (e.g. "I watched one torture victim") creates in the reader a sense of experiential proximity with otherwise distant suffering (assertion performative act and its spatio-temporal circumstance). When a BBC TV crew is quoted, evidentiality becomes intertextual. However, reference to "mythical" groups ("another witness", "one torture victim") is another form of burden of proof avoidance (*anonymisation* strategy).

Therefore, it seems that this "persistence on the humanitarian discourse of compassion towards victims was pivotal in identifying with the western moral virtues of 'civilised' humanity" (Kostantinidou, 2008, p.148). The evocation of "rape" scenarios serves

as a cultural trigger of the black rapist/white woman schema, which ultimately led to the ritualistic lynching and "castration of the racial Other" in the 1920s (Farmanfarmaian, 1998, p.288). Likewise, "Native Americans were accused of kidnapping white women and these allegations were used as justification for genocide" (Stabile and Kumar, 2005, p.770; see also Augoustinos et al., 2002; see also Kumar, 2004). This "sexual anxiety" "necessitates a display of virility" against "sand niggers" (ibid., p.289).

The pro-war argument from appeal to pity can be schematised as follows (Walton, 1997, p.105):

Premise 1	Saddam is using "torture chambers and rape rooms" to suppress his Iraqi restive people (President Bush's televised war ultimatum to Saddam Hussein on 17 March 2003, reported in *The Guardian*, 18 March 2003). The US war on Iraq is a "war for drinkable water", a "war to replace a regime that throws children from helicopters to force their parents to confess" (Ignatius, 2003).
Premise 2	"The Iraqis would be much better off after an invasion than they would be living indefinitely chained to Saddam Hussein" (Bobbitt, 2003). "Iraqis, even more than Americans, have much to gain from the downfall of a tyrant" (*WP*, 2003).
Conclusion	**Therefore** "The removal of Saddam Hussein would […] free millions of Iraqis from deprivation and oppression and make possible a broader movement to reshape the Arab Middle East, where political and economic backwardness have done much to spawn extremists such as al Qaeda" (*WP*, 2003); "prisoners can be released, ethnic minorities freed from brutal repression, war criminals brought to justice, and a polity based on torture and murder replaced by one that respects basic political and human rights"* (*WP*, 2003).
Silenced Rebuttal	"We say 'no' to this preventive war, carried out by the starvers of Iraqis by embargo" (Morin and de Saussure, 2003) because it is a mere "return to the colonial era and might aim at the remapping of the Middle East" (Myard et al., 2003). "[D]emocracy is a long-term endeavour, more complex than the neo-imperialists of the Bush Administration seem to realise" (Pons and Vernet, 2003). "American hegemony and imperial desires necessitate aborting any and all *genuine* democratic attempts and aspirations inside Iraq […] Alas, the prospect of a free and democratic Iraq is now more distant than ever"** (Antoon, 2003).

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* President Bush declared: "we will tear down the apparatus of terror and we will help you to build a new Iraq that is prosperous and free. In a free Iraq, there will be no more wars of aggression against your neighbors, no more poison factories, no more executions of dissidents, no more torture chambers and rape rooms. The tyrant will soon be gone. The day of your liberation is near" (*The Guardian*, 18 March 2003).

** When Bremer came to Iraq as a US neocolonial "proconsul", he occupied Saddam's palaces and "stifled Iraqi calls for direct elections" (Scahill, 2007, p.66). He instead created "a thirty-five-member Iraqi 'advisory' council, over which he would have total control and veto power" (ibid.). He "banned many Sunni groups from the body, as well as supporters of Shiite religious leader Muqtada al-Sadr, despite the fact that both had significant constituencies in Iraq" (ibid.). The "de-Baathification" process deprived the Iraqi skilled manpower from reconstructing post-invasion Iraq. In addition, the disbanding of the Iraqi military paved the way for its replacement by mercenary contractors (Blackwater) and a powerful Shiite militia (Al-Mahdi Army). Hence, it came as no surprise when John Negroponte was appointed as the first US ambassador to post-Saddam Iraq. Negroponte supervised the training of "death squads or repressive militaries to crush popular movements [in Latin America] Washington deemed a threat to its interests" (Scahill, 2007, p.182). The irony was that "President Bush has argued for a war ostensibly to protect democracy by besmirching democracy" (Hartnett and Stengrim, 2004, p.173).

Though philosophical moralists of the Platonic school view emotional appeal as irrational *ad pasiones* fallacies (and, thus, as an unreliable guide to action), efficacious rhetoric can turn emotion into a powerful "strategic manoeuvring" tactic to "adjust the conditions of the deliberation for the better" (Jacobs, 2002, p.125) and prepare the audience for "the proper

frame of mind" by drawing their attention to "the urgency of the situation" and "its moral gravity" (ibid.). However, bearing witness is never innocent of politics in that the pro-war culturalist and gendered narratives are meant to boost their topic potential to the effect that the need to verify the truthfulness of rape and torture allegations becomes functionally irrelevant to the production of an immediate "call for arms" appeal.

The problem, therefore, is that the media representation of the Iraq crisis reduces the conflict to a morality tale of good versus evil that requires moral denunciation. It portrays distant suffering of Muslim victims as "their" own fault and absolves the US of any political or moral responsibility. Besides, gender-based violence in the Iraqi context is sensationalised, exaggerated (in terms of scope and threat) and instrumentalised[5] in essentialist political and media narratives to the effect of fulfilling the US post-9/11 political agenda for the "Greater Middle East". More interestingly, witnessing texts have a "performative" power.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have shown how *ad hominem* arguments are derailments of appropriate strategic manoeuvring in that they irrelevantly involve (1) direct personal abuse, whose main goal is for the proponent to evade the burden of proof, (2) the accusation of the opponent having violated ethical norms of reasoned dialogue to force him to retract commitments from his support argument store and (3) questioning the disputant's motivation or intention. *Ad hominem* arguments, even if retracted by the contender, still detract from the "rhetorical credibility" of the opponent.

Another instance of fallacious manoeuvring is the deployment of narrative representations of the traumatic suffering of Iraqis in order to manipulate public opinion in favour of the pro-war perspective. Appeal to pity as a means to induce moral engagement is fallacious when it frames personal testimonies as having incontestable justificatory potential and fails to address the diversity of perspectives (perspectivisation strategy). Witnessing remains a political site of struggle "entangled with conflict and power, itself attesting to the contested ground of experience" (Ashuri and Pinchevski, 2009, p.155). Therefore, the safeguard against media manipulation is that readers can reconceptualise the Iraq conflict "in accordance with the reservoir of images they already carry with them as visual memories" (Möller, 2010, p.125).

Media witnessing[6] espousing the narrative of trauma and victimhood is a form of social activism that is infused in ethical and legal discourses operating within the matrix of testimonial engagement, moral responsibility and action. However, the act of bearing witness involves social actors who occupy different roles and hold competing positions and divergent interests and resources. Therefore, the appropriation of witnessing as an identity marker by many pro-war arguers remains a socially contested terrain of political struggle in that appealing to narratives of atrocity to legitimise a certain political action can yield prejudiced media accounts. The "chivalrous" engagement between "us" and the suffering cultural "others" in the mainstream global mediapolis does not always provide an unchallengeable record of what really happened.

The pro-war discussants deployed an enthymematic argument in that "the activated narrative scheme makes the audience construct a tightly connected web of information that far exceeds the content of the utterances that are presented to the audience" (Van den Hoven, 2015, pp.169–71). The deployed enthymematic topoi[7] evoke socially shared beliefs about human compassion and functions as a warrant for the pro-war argument. The tendency of narrative witnessing to reproduce rather than challenge Bush's pro-war rhetoric rendered

press relations more integral to policymaking and the media largely relinquished their "watchdog" role in favour of their self-assigned "guard dog" position.

Feminism and human rights activism certainly intersect with the struggle against other structural forms of oppression, especially the glorification of emerging neocolonial and militarised masculinities. After the invasion, the liberation of Iraqi women dropped off the US political agenda as "sexual abuse and rape in prisons" became "part of counterinsurgency campaigns" (Al-Ali, 2016, p.10). The torture images of Abu Ghraib (200 made popular, but 1,600 kept secret) represented not only America's drift away from its constructed image of the post-World War II "moral beacon" but also "carried a post-modern burden as well: the burden of shame" (Hamm, 2007, p.275; see also Andén-Papadopoulos, 2008, 2014).[8] The sexual enslavement of Yezidi women by Daesh fighters marked an unprecedented scale of brutality against Iraqi women. Unsurprisingly, the "Shock and Awe" attacks on Iraq have ignited sectarian violence, created a fertile ground for global terrorism, inaugurated a new era of "preventive" regime-change and established a hybrid theocratic junta that, at best, bears more resemblance to the aspirations of Ayatollah Khomeini than Paul Wolfowitz.

Acknowledgements

Funding

Notes

1 An *ad hominem* argument is not always fallacious. *Ad hominem* fallacies are fallacies of relevance and they are context-dependent. What counts as "relevant" to the interlocutor's argument will vary with context.

2 In 2003, Mohamad El-Baradei stated that "The IAEA concluded, by December 1998, that it had neutralised Iraq's past nuclear program and that, therefore, there were no unresolved disarmament issues left at that time" (quoted in Hartnett and Stengrim, 2004, p.172). Besides, the evidence for Saddam's WMD threat presented by the British secret service turned out to be a mere plagiarised MA thesis of a Kurdish Iraqi student of the University of California (Claude Jacquemart, *Le Figaro*, 15 March 2003).

3 "By August 2002, General Franks had spent close to $700 million quietly preparing the military groundwork in the Gulf" and the CIA had also spent "about $189 million" for the same objective (Lando, 2007, p.219). Then, the imposition of non-fly zones by the Anglo-American planes (without UN authorisation) targeting the air defence capacities of Iraq constituted the subsequent preparation phase for the 2003 invasion of Iraq (ibid.). Such build-up for the invasion was privatised: "When US tanks rolled into Baghdad in March 2003, they brought with them the largest army of private contractors ever deployed in a war" (Scahill, 2007, xvii). The privatisation of war brought to Iraq the Blackwater-recruited commandos of mercenaries, with valued expertise not in "humanitarian" aid but in "kidnapping, torturing and killing defenseless civilians" (ibid., p.200). In addition, foreign contractors marched into Iraq to "reap enormous profits while ordinary Iraqis lived in squalor and insecurity" (ibid., p.119). For example, Halliburton was awarded a $11billion "reconstruction"

contract (Lando, 2007, p.259). During Bremer's short "pro-consulate" in Iraq "some \$9 billion of Iraqi reconstruction funds were unaccounted for" (Scahill, 2007, p.61).

4 During the sanctions, US reporters from Baghdad were "careful to avoid inferring causality for Iraq's plight, sticking with the facts directly visible to [them]" (Goss, 2002, p.95). Such a "voyeuristic" stance led to the construction of an "Orientalized" Iraq framed as "a portrait of a nation that has authored its own fate with its defiance of law, aggressive ambitions and malevolent head of state, who also functions as a synecdoche for an undifferentiated citizenry" (ibid.).

5 Condoleezza Rice and Dick Cheney met with Women for a Free Iraq (a newly formed group of US-backed Iraqi opposition activists) to publicise the Iraqi regime's abuse of women's rights, in preparation for the invasion of Iraq. Similarly, Tony Blair met a delegation of Iraqi women in November 2002 for the same purpose (Al-Ali, 2016, p.8).

6 Media witnessing refers simultaneously to the witnesses' accounts in media reports, the media actors themselves bearing witness and the positioning of the targeted media audiences as distant witnesses to represented events.

7 An argument is characterised as "enthymematic" when implicit premises needed to make the argument reasonable are only implicitly recoverable from the context of the argument (Walton, 1989, p.115). A "topos" is a system of cultural-social cognition shared by a rhetorical community, which is activated as "a discursive resource in which one may find arguments for sustaining a conclusion" (van der Valk, 2003, p.319). Topoi are the "basic principles" underlying any "accepted" social conduct, and hence constitute "the consensual, self-evident issues of a community" (ibid.). Topoi are effective persuasive tools that call upon "socially shared values", "beliefs" or "maxims" of a particular discursive community with the aim of informing discussions on disputed issues (ibid.).

8 The Taguba Report revealed that "numerous incidents of sadistic, blatant and wanton criminal abuses were inflicted on several detainees" (Taguba, 2005, p.74). This "systemic and illegal abuse of detainees was intentionally perpetrated by several members of the military police guard force" (ibid.). "Evidence gathered from Abu Ghraib, Guantanamo Bay and US prisons in Afghanistan suggests that torture, the keeping of 'ghost detainees' and other violations of the Geneva Conventions were endemic within the system of [US] military custody" (Wilson, 2005, p.19).

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