Sociocognitive Discourse Studies

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Introduction

In the summer of 2014, on July 28, half a million British readers of the *Daily Telegraph* were served the usual "view" of their newspaper on immigration:

> **Coalition deserves credit for progress on tackling unchecked immigration**
>
> **David Cameron's Government is finally taking steps to stop abuses of immigration system that were ignored by his predecessors**
>
> Voters consistently tell opinion pollsters that immigration is among their biggest concerns – so it is incumbent upon our political leaders to address the issue. The last government patently failed to do so, presiding over the greatest inflow of foreign nationals in this country's history while doing nothing to plan for their arrival.
>
> Until 1997, most voters believed that successive governments, by and large, had operated sensible immigration controls. However, Labour's decision to open the jobs market – not least to workers from the old Warsaw Pact bloc – saw the system weakened to the point of collapse. Putting it back together, and reviving public confidence in the UK's ability to control its own borders, has been a tall order.
>
> In his article on the page opposite, David Cameron argues that the Coalition has begun this process, by clamping down on abuses and making sure we take in the right people who will benefit the country. He also announces new measures to tackle the "pull" that an easily accessible benefits system exerts: instead of unemployed EU workers being able to claim Jobseekers' Allowance or child benefit for six months, that will be reduced to a maximum of three. Recruitment agencies will also be required to advertise jobs in the UK and not just exclusively abroad.
>
> By itself, this will not be enough to fix the problem – the Government is hampered by EU rules and, as Mr Cameron says, the failures of a welfare and education system that has produced too few qualified workers. Ministers still look unlikely to reach their target of reducing net immigration to "tens of thousands" before the next election. But they certainly deserve much credit for their sustained efforts to get to grips with a problem their predecessors simply ignored.

A *systematic discourse analysis* of this editorial will attend to many of the typical features of this media genre, such as its characteristic overall organization, its (political) topics, or the argumentative or rhetorical strategies employed to persuasively present this 'view' to the readers. As many newspaper genres, also this editorial has a headline,

in this case summarizing the newspaper's opinion as defended in the editorial, printed on top and in bold characters. In the online newspaper version, the article is accompanied by a picture of UKIP leader Nigel Farage (not reproduced here) under the headline. More generally, as is the case for all coherent text and talk, the editorial has the usual local syntactic and semantic structures that define its grammaticality and meaningfulness as a discourse. Among many aspects of discourse semantics, the expression "*stop abuses*" in the headline presupposes that there *were* such abuses of the immigration system under the previous (Labour) government. Among many more properties of editorials, such a discourse analysis would pay attention to the way such a 'view' is formulated as an opinion or appraisal, by such lexical expressions as "*deserves credit*" in the very headline. The other chapters in this Handbook detail these kinds of systematic and explicit discourse analysis.

Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) typically goes beyond such a classical study of the structural properties of text or talk, and relates these structures to social structures. It may begin to identify the author(s) of the text as editors of a newspaper as a powerful media organization, able to influence the opinions of hundreds of thousands of readers. More specifically, such a critical analysis will remind of the well-known fact that the *Telegraph* is a conservative newspaper, and may be expected to support a conservative government. That analyzing such a broader sociopolitical context of this editorial is relevant for discourse analysis, and not an irrelevant fact of 'background', may be shown by relating the opinion of the editorial with broader policies of the media organization, as well as those of the ruling Conservative Party. In other words, such a study of the sociopolitical context of this editorial is carried out in order to be able to explain *why* the text has the appraisal structure it displays.

CDS not only engages in social and political analyses of the context of text and talk, but more specifically takes an explicit stand (also a 'view') on the abuse of power a large media organization may have by manipulating the attitudes of readers on immigration. It explains that and how the symbolic elites of politics and the mass media are able to control public discourse and attitudes and thus may contribute to the reproduction of racism and xenophobia in the country.

In the structural and critical discourse studies mentioned above and explained in detail in most of the chapters of this handbook, there is still a crucial dimension missing: the **sociocognitive** dimension. Sociocognitive Discourse Studies (SCDS) more broadly relates discourse structures to social structures via a complex sociocognitive interface. As in Cognitive Linguistics, it critically describes the cognitive aspects of the use of some concepts or metaphors (e.g., as expressed in *inflow of foreign nationals*). But more broadly, SCDS deals with the ongoing communicative Common Ground and the shared social knowledge, as well as the attitudes and ideologies, of language users as current participants of the communicative situation and as members of social groups and communities.

As we shall see in more detail below, a sociocognitive approach not only makes explicit the fundamental role of mental representations, but also shows that many structures of discourse itself can only (completely) be described in terms of various cognitive notions, especially those of information, beliefs or knowledge of participants. Among many other discourse structures, this is the case for phonological stress, syntactic word order, topic and focus, the structures of propositions, local coherence relations between propositions, pronouns and co-reference, global meanings or topics of discourse, indexical expressions, evidentials, terms of appraisal, metaphors, frames, implications, presuppositions and argumentations.

SCDS does so in terms of explicit psychological theories of mental representations, such as individual mental models of journalists or other language users, and the ways these models *mediate* between shared social cognition (knowledge, attitudes, ideologies), societal structures, and actual text and talk. Thus, whereas most CDS studies describe and explain discourse in terms of its social and political contexts, SCDS goes one crucial step further and includes a *cognitive interface* between discourse and society. It claims that there is no direct link between such different structures as those of discourse and society, and that social or political structures can only affect text and talk through the *minds* of language users. This is possible because social members represent both social structures as well as discourse structures in their minds, and thus are able to relate these mentally before expressing them in actual text and talk.

A sociocognitive approach to discourse is a particular application of a more general theory or philosophy of *social constructionism*, which holds that social and political 'reality' are constructions of social members. Different from some other forms of social constructionism (such as Discursive Psychology or Conversation Analysis), this approach not only holds that such 'constructions' are mental representations, implemented by the brain, but also that these mental processes and representations should be taken seriously and analyzed in detail, for instance in terms of contemporary advances in the cognitive sciences.

It has often been recalled in contemporary discourse studies that Discourse Analysis (DA) is not a *method* of analysis, but an area or discipline of study, using many different qualitative and quantitative methods. Similarly, it has repeatedly been stated that CDA is not a method either but a critical attitude while doing DA, also using many methods, for instance by focusing on discursive forms power abuse, as was signaled above for the *Telegraph.*

The same should be affirmed for SCDS. Sociocognitive Discourse Studies is not a method either, but may use many different methods. It is a multidisciplinary type of CDA relating discourse structures with social structures through a cognitive interface. The cognitive component of this type of multidisciplinary discourse study may be methodologically as diverse as its analysis of discourse or social structures. Hence, instead of speaking of sociocognitive discourse analysis, we prefer to speak of *Sociocognitive Discourse Studies* (SCDS) – as we have done above – admitting many different theories, analytical or ethnographic methods, experimental procedures, and practical applications, carried out within a critical perspective.

The cognitive interface

Since the characteristic property of SCDS is its emphasis on the cognitive interface between discursive and social structures, this chapter selectively focuses on this component, also because basic notions of cognitive and social psychology are less known in the study of discourse. Yet, a section of a single chapter obviously cannot possibly provide a fully-fledged introduction to all relevant psychological notions involved, and hence only presents a very brief account of those concepts we need for Sociocognitive Discourse Studies.

Although each aspect of sociocognitive theory would require lengthy explanation, we summarize the theory in terms of its major notions, as follows:

Mind, Memory and Discourse Processing

a. **Cognitive processes**, such as thinking, perceiving, knowing, believing, understanding, interpreting, planning, hoping, feeling, etc., take place in the **mind** or **memory** of individual **social actors as members** of social groups and communities.

b. These cognitive processes in memory are implemented in (various regions of) the **brain**, (as yet only partly) made explicit in neuropsychology, further ignored in this chapter. Yet relevant to know about the relation between discourse and the brain is that brain lesions, e.g., caused by accidents, illness or deterioration (e.g., Alzheimer) may cause aphasia or other linguistic and discursive **disorders**.

c. Cognitive processes in memory operate on specific cognitive structures usually called (mental) **representations**, e.g., by forming, changing, storing, or (de)activating them. Thus, thoughts, knowledge, beliefs, interpretations, plans, attitudes or ideologies are different kinds of mental representation.

d. Cognitive processes and representations cause and **control all human action and interaction** and hence also all language use and discourse. We partly describe and explain discourse in terms of these 'underlying' properties of the mind.

e. Generally, a distinction is made between **Short Term Memory (STM)** and **Long Term Memory (LTM).** Because of its specific functions, STM is also called **Working Memory (WM),** where 'online' processes of attention, understanding or the production of action take place, often in fractions of seconds and with the limited information stored in the memory buffer(s) of WM. LTM stores the results of these processes, for instance in the form of knowledge or beliefs, which may be activated and used again by WM for future operations, for instance when we remember something or when we need that 'information' for perception, action or discourse.

f. **Discourse production and comprehension** are very complex cognitive processes executed ongoingly ('online') and *in parallel* by specific operations in Working Memory, for instance for the processing of sounds, images, phonemes, morphemes, lexical items, syntactic structures, local and global meanings, overall patterns of text

or talk (superstructures) and structures and strategies of interaction. At present we only have very limited insight into the details of these processes of WM and their (limited) memory resources or timing, especially for the higher levels of discourse.

g. One of the (many) problems to be resolved of these many complex parallel processes involved in the production and understanding of discourse is how they are **controlled** and **coordinated** in fractions of second and with apparently limited memory resources. Just a summary of all processes involved would fill pages of description (or computer program code) – ranging from phonemes, graphemes or image parts on the 'lower' levels to producing or understanding overall meanings, topics, conversational interaction or narrative or persuasive strategies at the 'higher' levels of parallel processing. For complex discourse, part of this **Control System** probably consists of overall **semantic macrostructures** ('topics') that control the production and comprehension of local sentence meanings (propositions).

h. The processes of language use and discourse activate and apply specific **linguistic and discursive knowledge systems** of units, rules and strategies in LTM, such as those of grammar, the lexicon, local and global semantics, pragmatics, conversation and other forms of interaction.

i. Whereas many of the concepts and processes of memory and discourse processing mentioned above are (partly) made explicit in **psycholinguistics**, the **cognitive psychology of discourse** specifically also focuses on the description and explanation of **'higher' level processing** of discourse. Such higher level processes may involve the establishment of local coherence between meanings (propositions) of sentences and its expression in various types of cohesion or co-reference (e.g., pronouns), the overall coherence of topics and their expression in headlines, titles or summaries, the schematic overall organization (superstructures) of stories, argumentation, news or other genres, or the complex local and global coordination of speech acts and conversational interaction.

Personal Cognition: Mental Models

j. Whereas traditionally the semantics of language and discourse was limited to the description of local or global meanings, for instance in terms of propositions,

cognitive psychology has shown that such meanings are based on underlying **mental models**.

k. Mental models are *subjective* representations of events or situations in **Episodic or Autobiographical Memory** (EM), the personal part of LTM where we store our ongoing and past personal experiences. If we observe, participate in, or read or hear about an event we ongoingly construe a mental model of that event.

l. Since we observe, participate or talk about events many thousands of times in our lives, mental models have a **standard schematic structure** of a limited number of categories that allow very fast processing, probably developed during human evolution, such as Setting (Place, Time), Participants (and their Identities, Roles and Relationships), Event or Action (and its Intention or Purpose). Such a schema allows us to 'analyze' and understand a situation or event in fractions of seconds and then take appropriate action, as is also the case in conversation.

m. **Producing a meaningful discourse** about an event, such as a story or news article, involves the (partial) expression of a mental model of that event. Similarly, **understanding such a discourse** consists in the construction or updating of a mental model of the event.

n. Mental models are **individual, personal, subjective and multimodal**. They not only subjectively represent a situation or an event, but also opinions and emotions, and partly in terms of vision, sounds, gestures, motor movements, etc., as processed by different parts of the brain. Hence traditional notions such as (possibly different) speaker or hearer meaning of the 'same' discourse, are accounted for by the different personal mental models of the participant language users.

o. The **direct communicative intention** of much discourse is the transmission of the mental model of speakers/writers. Hearers/readers, however, construe their own, possibly (quite) different 'interpretation' of such discourse in terms of their own mental model. The little we later **remember** of a discourse are fragments (usually only the higher level macrostructure representing main topics) of our mental model of a discourse, and not of what was actually said or meant by the speaker or writer.

p. Language users not only construe mental models of the events or situations they talk, write, read or hear *about*, but also of the very communicative situation *in which* they ongoingly participate. These mental models are called **context models**, or simply **contexts**. They make sure that discourses (and their speech acts and

interactions) are **appropriate** in the current communicative situation. This is a specific form of **adaptation**, as is the case for all human interaction (more or less well) adapted to the social situation or the natural or physical environment. Whereas mental models representing what discourse is about (refers to) may be called **semantic models**, context models may also be called **pragmatic models**.

q. Context models are specific instances of our **ongoing experiences** in which we represent (and hence understand) the social situation in which we are currently involved and active (or that define our **plans** for future action). These more general **models of experience** are probably shaped by evolutionary processes of adaptation: humans can only survive when they are able to (more or less) appropriately but efficiently analyze, understand and act upon current social situations or natural environments. In our everyday lives, much of this modelling has been automatized and only partly conscious, as is the case for the actions we perform in them.

r. As is the case for all mental models, also context models consist of a **schematic structure**, such as Setting, Participants and Action, but then specified for communicative actions, speech acts or conversational interaction, and Participants with communicative identities, roles and relations. The information of these context categories must be **relevant** for ongoing discourse. There are many *socially* relevant aspects of interaction (such as the appearance or clothes of participants) which are however not (always) *communicatively* relevant as part of the pragmatics discourse, and hence do not systematically influence its appropriateness (as is the case for current time and place, the identities of speakers or their relations, intentions or purposes).

s. Producing discourse, thus, not only consists in forming or activating a semantic model of an event we want to speak or write about, but *before that* of planning, construing, and **dynamically adapting** a context model: where, when, with whom, as what, how, and with what purpose we are right now or soon talking or writing. In other words, pragmatic models control the communicative expression of semantic models: Indeed, it depends on the communicative situation *what* we talk about with whom, and especially also *how* we (should) do so. Thus, apart from speech acts and appropriateness in general, context models control the **discourse genre** and **style** of discourse.

t. Social members not only produce or understand discourse as individual persons, with their own personal history, autobiographical experiences, knowledge, opinions and emotions, but also as **social actors and as members** of groups, communities, organizations or institutions.

u. As is the case for their **knowledge of language and discourse**, shared with other members of linguistic and discursive communities, social actors also share **sociocultural knowledge of the world** with other members of various epistemic communities, as well as **attitudes, ideologies, norms and values** with other members of various kinds of social groups. These forms of **social cognition** are generally located in what is traditionally called **Semantic Memory**, part of LTM, but perhaps better called **Social Memory**.

v. The **acquisition and application of world knowledge** is crucial for all cognitive processes of perception, understanding, action, interaction, language use, communication and discourse.

w. In **discourse understanding** such knowledge is activated and applied in the understanding of words, sentence meanings and overall discourse meanings, and in the **construction of personal mental models**. And vice versa, the understanding of discourse and the formation of mental models of specific events may be generalized and abstracted from in the **acquisition or modification of generic knowledge** of the world. Knowledge is presupposed, expressed, conveyed, corrected, etc. in many ways in nearly all structures at all levels in discourse, such *stress* distribution or word order to organize *topic* (known) and *focus* (new or more salient) information in sentences, the expression of knowledge sources in *evidentials*, the use of *presuppositions* and *implications* or the *rights* of participants to tell about new events in *conversation*.

x. As yet we have only fragmentary insight into the location(s) of socioculturally shared knowledge in the brain and in their **structures or organizations in memory**, e.g., in terms of *hierarchical relations between concepts* (e.g., a car is a vehicle), or as *frames*, *stereotypes* or more dynamic *scripts* or *scenarios*. It has also been proposed that, like mental models of concrete events, such generic knowledge is

multimodal, e.g., involving vision, sound, smell, sensorimotor and emotional information (e.g., what we know or have experienced about cars).

y. Generally ignored in linguistics and cognitive psychology, but extensively dealt with in the social sciences (which in turn usually ignore a cognitive approach), social actors may also act and communicate as **members of social movements or ideological groups**, and share **attitudes** about fundamental social issues, such as immigration, abortion or terrorism. Although extensively studied in social psychology, the detailed cognitive structures of these attitudes are at present unknown. As is the case for generic knowledge, also socially shared attitudes may be applied and specified in the personal opinions of the mental models of group members – and finally (partly) expressed in discourse.

z. Finally, these social attitudes may themselves be organized by more fundamental underlying ('positive' or 'negative') **ideologies**, such as socialism, feminism, neoliberalism, racism and anti-racism, militarism and pacifism, and so on. Although also the cognitive location and organization of ideologies is at present unknown, they probably feature **fundamental categories** defining social groups, such as the identity, actions, goals, norms and values and resources of a group, as well as their (often polarized) relations with other groups (allies or enemies). This **polarization** between *Us (ingroup)* and *Them (outgroup)* may also appear in the specific social attitudes, and then in the mental models and the discourses expressing such models.

This brief summary of the sociocognitive processes and representations involved in language use and discourse ignores many details, as well as details at present unknown in psychology. Yet, the theoretical framework does show not only how cognition is involved in (the processing of) actual talk or text, but also why it is needed in the very *description and analysis* of many discourse structures:

(i) **Stress, intonation and word order** of sentences depend on what *information* is currently known, focused on, new or unexpected, and as currently shared an dynamically changed as *Common Ground* among participants.

(ii) **Meanings** of words, sentences or sequences of sentences are produced on the basis of the grammar and other linguistic and discursive knowledge of language

users, and on the basis of the shared generic, sociocultural knowledge of members of a epistemic communities.

(iii) **Coherence** relations between sentences or turns of conversation may be partly expressed by linguistic or discursive forms of cohesion (e.g., by pronouns or definite articles), but are based on and defined by relations between participants or events in underlying *mental models* of language users.

(iv) **Opinion and emotion words**, as well as volume or intonation, are expressions of personal opinions and emotions represented in (multimodal) *mental models.*

(v) **Global topics or themes** (or frames, etc.) as semantic macrostructures are planned and interpreted as the macrostructures of underlying *mental models*, and control the sequential online production or interpretation of the local meanings of sentences.

(vi) **Deictic or indexical expressions** refer to or presuppose information in the schematic categories of the *context model*: Time/Place/Perspective, Participant (Identities, Roles and Relations), current social or communicative action, as well as the Intentions and current Knowledge (Common Ground) of the participants.

(vii) **Speech acts** are produced on the basis of appropriateness conditions defined in terms of the properties of *context models* (such as the knowledge, wishes, intentions or power of the participants) – as is the case for expressions of **politeness**.

(viii) **Evidentials**, whether as specific morphemes in some languages, or as more explicit expressions in many languages (e.g., *I saw, heard, read, etc. that…; She said that…*) are expressions of how knowledge expressed in discourse was acquired, for instance in terms of current or old experience or context models.

(ix) **The conventional, schematic, canonical structures (superstructures)** of various discourse genres are planned and understood as expressions of shared cultural knowledge of the schematic organization of such discourse genres, as is the case for **narrative** or **argumentation**, or the conventional organization of **news reports** or **scientific articles**.

(x) **Metaphors** are based on the multimodal structure of mental *models of experience*. Thus large numbers of refugees or immigrants may be (negatively and manipulatively) described as WAVES because of the anxiety of the experience of drowning in huge waves – as well as on the basis of general, *sociocultural*

knowledge of waves – as we shall see in more detail below in the analysis of the editorial of the *Telegraph*.

(xi) **Ideological polarization** at all levels of discourse, emphasizing the Good properties of Us (ingroup) and Bad properties of Them (outgroup), express underlying attitudes (e.g. on immigration or abortion) and ideologies (e.g. of racism or sexism), via particular, personal mental models of specific events, for instance as polarized topics, lexicon, metaphors, images, etc.

Although also this list is far from complete, it may have become obvious that many properties of words, sentences and discourses cannot be accounted for without at least partial description of properties of underlying mental representations, such as models, knowledge and other forms of social cognition --- besides the socioculturally shared knowledge of grammar and discourse genres – of individual language users on the one hand, and of social groups or communities of the other hand.

The fundamental role of knowledge

At several points above we have mentioned the role of knowledge in the account of discourse structure. Although many details of the cognitive representation (and neuropsychological processes) of knowledge are still unknown, it must be stressed that the core of the sociocognitive account of discourse consists of the personal and socially shared knowledge of language users as social actors and members of epistemic communities.

We have seen that all our everyday experiences, and hence our personal knowledge of events, are stored as subjective, multimodal **mental models**. These mental models control topic and comment, local coherence as well as the contents of stories, among many other discourse structures.

However, such mental models, as well as the ways these are (partly) expressed in discourse, are in turn based on **socioculturally shared generic or historical knowledge**, organized in many different (and as yet only partly understood) ways in memory.

In *didactic (expository, etc.) discourse*, such discourse structures may also be expressed directly, for instance in explanations, definitions, textbooks, etc. Hence, not all discourse is based on mental models.

Generic knowledge, thus, may be directly *acquired* by didactic discourse, or by generalization and abstraction from mental models of personal experience or as expressed in stories or news reports. For instance, most of what we know about terrorism in general is derived from specific mental models of news reports in the media. And, vice versa, once acquired, such generic knowledge it is again *applied* or *instantiated* in the formation of new mental models construed in the understanding of new stories.

Context models, subjectively representing the relevant aspects of ongoing communicative situations, crucially have a *Knowledge Device.* This device at each moment 'calculates' what knowledge recipients (probably) have: **Common Ground**. Such a device is able to operate (although we cannot look in the minds of recipients) because it is based on (i) shared sociocultural knowledge between participants as members of the same Epistemic Community, (ii) knowledge derived from previous encounters, conversations or e-mails (mental models and context models), e.g. among family members, friends or acquaintances, (iii) information derived from mutual observation and participation in the same communicative situation (as defined by the current state of the dynamic context model, (iv) information derived from what has been said or written before in the same discourse (i.e., the mental model construed thus far).

Complex, efficient strategies allow language users to efficiently process all these knowledge sources and at each point of a conversation infer, more or less correctly, what the recipients already know. It is this the information of the Epistemic Device that ongoingly controls the production of the discourse structures we have mentioned above: phonological stress (new or salient information tends to have more stress than known information), word order (in English often known information comes first), topic and comment, definite articles, implications and presuppositions, etc. The general **epistemic and pragmatic strategy** of discourse is that knowledge that is supposed to be known by the recipients tends to remain implicit, less prominent or presupposed.

These general epistemic strategies apply for all discourse genres, but some discourse genres will tend to be more explicit than others. Hence, in conversations among family members or friends who know each other well, discourse obviously will

tend to be much more implicit than conversations among strangers, or news reports in the press.

Besides these many epistemic strategies, text and talk may further be controlled by various **social rules, norms and values**. We may not tell what we know to anyone in any situation. Thus, speakers who have personal experiences of an event usually have more *right* or *priority* to tell a story than others who don't have such an experience (as an epistemic source). In some situations, such as exams or interrogations, we *must* tell what we know. Doctors sometimes do not tell all they know about the health conditions of patients. The Official Secrets Act in the UK, and similar laws in many countries, also limit what (secret) knowledge may not be divulged. Newspapers receive vast amounts of information, but only publish a fragment of such information. Thus, we read much more about terrorism or migration in the newspaper than about 'our' racism or sexism.

In other words, the *management of knowledge* in discourse, is a vast and complex problem, dealt with in various forms of **Epistemic Discourse Analysis,** which describes and explains what knowledge is made explicit, detailed, emphasized, implied, presupposed, suggested, hidden, manipulated in and by discourse.

The Telegraph Editorial and its Cognitive Basis

With the theoretical framework presented above, many of the structures of the Editorial of the *Telegraph* can now be accounted for in sociocognitive (and later in more sociopolitical) terms. Again, we give a summary of examples, because a complete description would need dozens, if not hundreds of pages:

Media discourse. The editorial is a specific genre of media discourse, and as such planned and executed on the basis of the generic knowledge and the specific (ongoing) *context model* of the journalist who during writing knows current *time* (day, hour) and *place* (UK) in order to be able to write on *current* affairs and within a *deadline*, and in her or his professional *role* as journalist or editor, and *employee* of a media organization, and for *readers* of that organization, with the *intention* to inform or influence them, and on the basis of shared (Common Ground) *knowledge* about immigration in the UK.

Editorial. More specifically, the journalist of the editorial presupposes specific political knowledge, and formulates a personal or institutional *opinion*, based on underlying conservative *attitudes* on immigration and general conservative *ideologies* against foreigners, on the one hand, and against Labour, on the other hand. These underlying context models, event models --and their specification in terms of opinions-- control the evaluative (appraisal) expressions in the editorial. On the other hand, editorials are a *persuasive, argumentative genre*, and hence the *discursive knowledge* of the journalist of that genre controls the argumentative structures of the editorial.

Let us now focus on some of the more specific structures of the editorial:

(1) Coalition deserves credit for progress on tackling unchecked immigration
> **David Cameron's Government is finally taking steps to stop abuses of immigration system that were ignored by his predecessors**

This compound **Headline** summarizes the (i) overall meaning (semantic macrostructure) of the editorial, as represented in the current mental model of the journalist about the event (the tackling of immigration by the coalition government of the UK), and (ii) the overall positive opinion (as expressed by **positive appraisal terms** *deserves credit, progress, tackling, finally*) of the journalist or newspaper as represented in their event model. Indeed, another newspaper, or other readers might express the 'same' event in another mental model, with another opinion, and expressed in another editorial or discourse. The **metaphors** *tackling* and *taking steps* express the positive aspects of the mental model representing positive government actions and policies in terms of challenge and as forward movement. The (positive) mental model of the journalist is a specification of the (i) positive attitude shared by the journalist about the current government and (ii) the negative attitude about immigration, both based on a conservative ideology. **Presuppositions** as expressed by *unchecked, abuses, ignored by predecessors,* express a negative opinion about (previous) Labour governments in the event model, as well as immigration, both based again on underlying polarized attitudes and ideologies between Us/Ingroup (Conservatives, English) and Them/Outgroups (Labour, Immigrants). Similarly, the **temporal adverb** *finally* presupposes the information in the mental model of the journalist that this government action comes after a long time (of ignorance of former governments) and also implies a positive

evaluation of the current government. Although the previous governments are not explicitly mentioned, their identity is **implied**, and hence part of the mental models of both journalist (and readers, based on their general political knowledge) that these previous governments were Labour governments.

(2) Voters consistently tell opinion pollsters that immigration is among their biggest concerns – so it is incumbent upon our political leaders to address the issue.

As is the case for all discourse, and hence also for this editorial, but not requiring further analysis here, the production and comprehension of this editorial and this paragraph presupposes vast amounts of socioculturally shared knowledge, e.g., about politics and policies (voters, polls, leaders, government) and about immigration. This paragraph more specifically is based on a **mental model** of the journalist about (negative) past and (positive) current immigration policy. The model also features an **opinion** in the form of a recommendation (*address the issue of immigration*), as is typical of the genre of editorials (and known and expected by the readers). This recommendation is based on a more general political **norm** (*incumbent*), expressed here in the form of an argumentation: if voters are concerned about an issue, political leaders should address it. Such a norm may be part of underlying **attitudes** about elections (*voters, polls*) and policies (*address the issue*) and a more general democratic **ideology,** featuring the will of the people. At the same time, this sentence may be read as expressing a **populist ideology**, featuring attitudes about the determining influence of polls on government policy. Since it is known that the *Telegraph* does not exactly favor such people power for all issues, but does so for the issue of immigration, the application of a populist ideology here specifically controls a mental model featuring a *negative opinion* about immigration – as all readers will understand it in their mental models, although the editorial itself doesn't say so in this first sentence. Hence, discourses are like icebergs, of which much implied information is present in the underlying mental models of the participants but not in the 'surface' of discourse itself. Such a negative opinion is consistent with conservative attitudes and ideologies, and since (on the basis of information of the context model) the *Telegraph* is a conservative newspaper, readers will be able to derive an implication in their mental model even when the editorial is not explicit.

(3) The last government patently failed to do so, presiding over the greatest inflow of foreign nationals in this country's history while doing nothing to plan for their arrival.

We have seen above that ideologies tend to be polarized between positive US (ingroup) and negative THEM (outgroup). This sentence, expressing a mental model about the policies of the past (Labour) government patently does so in a (very) negative description of Labour governments – again without mentioning Labour explicitly, but only indirectly referring to the 'last government'. Again, such an interpretation requires readers to activate their political-historical knowledge to make this inference. The negative description of the previous Labour government not only expresses a negative opinion in the mental model of the (journalist of) the *Telegraph*, applying a more general negative attitude about Labour, itself specifying a Conservative ideology, but it does so with rhetorical emphasis with the use of specific lexical items: *patently*, *greatest inflow (…) in history, doing nothing*. Indeed, underlying ideological polarization precisely shows in emphasizing the negative properties of THEM.

As we have seen above, the **metaphor** expressed as *the greatest inflow* is the standard one for the description of the arrival of many immigrants, namely immigration represented as a vast and menacing FLOOD in which we all may drown, in this case rhetorically enhanced by a **historical comparison** (*greatest of history*). These are precisely the --very concrete—(multimodal) mental models conservative media and political discourse use to oppose immigration, because they create fear among the population and thus are able to **manipulate** both the population (voters) as well as government policies.

(4) Until 1997, most voters believed that successive governments, by and large, had operated sensible immigration controls. However, Labour's decision to open the jobs market – not least to workers from the old Warsaw Pact bloc – saw the system weakened to the point of collapse. Putting it back together, and reviving public confidence in the UK's ability to control its own borders, has been a tall order.

As is often the case for editorials, this paragraph **reminds** the readers of a previous governments and (immigration) policies, by activating an old mental model many readers may no longer remember. Again we find the ideologically polarized negative (*weakened, collapse*, etc.) opinion about Labour policies, as opposed to *sensible* policies (of Conservative governments).

Although the underlying (conservative) political ideology primarily is used to discredit Labour and to support the current Conservative government, this paragraph as

well as the whole editorial is specifically focused on the issue of immigration, and more specifically on *controls* of immigration. This implies that immigration must be limited (against the *opening* of the job market by Labour), a normative mental model, applying a negative attitude about immigration and immigrants, itself based on a conservative ideology.

The **metaphor** of *opening* the job market, and hence the country, represents these as a BUILDING, as is also the case for the *system* which is metaphorically described as being at the point of *collapse*. As is the case for the WAVE and FLOOD metaphors for immigration (fear to drown), the COLLAPSE metaphor construes concrete mental models with emotions of fear (to be crushed by immigrants). The sequence of expressions controlled by mental models applying populist ideologies here features *public confidence*, and the metaphor expressed as *reviving* (presupposing that such confidence was nearly dead).

(5) In his article on the page opposite, David Cameron argues that the Coalition has begun this process, by clamping down on abuses and making sure we take in the right people who will benefit the country. He also announces new measures to tackle the "pull" that an easily accessible benefits system exerts: instead of unemployed EU workers being able to claim Jobseekers' Allowance or child benefit for six months, that will be reduced to a maximum of three. Recruitment agencies will also be required to advertise jobs in the UK and not just exclusively abroad.

After the rhetorically emphasized expression of the underlying negative mental models of earlier Labour immigration policies, the ideological polarization in this paragraph predictably emphasizes the positive policies of the current Conservative government. Interestingly, and quite uniquely, the paragraph deictically (*opposite page*) – and hence expressing the context model of both journalist and readers -- refers to an article in the same newspaper by Conservative Leader David Cameron himself, summarized and supported in the editorial. In other words, the **ideological alignment** of the *Telegraph* with the Conservative government could not be more explicit – at least on the issue of immigration policy.

As before, the ideological polarization not only is represented and expressed between Conservative and Labour, but also between Conservative/Us/We English as ingroup and Them/immigrants as outgroup, e.g. by emphasizing negative actions of THEM: *abuses*. Government action **metaphorically** represented and expressed as *clamping down* in such a case implies a positive **value**, because it is an energetic way to counter something negative (abuses).

The underlying immigration attitude of the *Telegraph* is then made explicit by **presupposing** that a positive immigration policy only admits the *right* people, defined as people who *benefit* the country. Again, the explicit positive appraisal terms express underlying values that **polarize** the **attitude** on immigration between *right* and *wrong* immigrants, and policies that *benefit* or *harm* the country.

The rest of the paragraph summarizes the new Conservative immigration policy (as set out by Cameron), and --as elsewhere in the editorial-- features several interesting **implications** and **presuppositions**. For instance, the expression *the "pull" of easily accessible benefits*, presupposes that there are or were such easily accessible benefits, and that such benefits do exercise such "pull" – presuppositions which at the same time apply that the ease of getting benefits is bad – a normal specification of a negative value in a conservative attitude about benefits, itself dominated by a conservative ideology. The rest of the policy also implies limitation (allowances) from 6 to 3 months, as a specification of the general conservative value of attitudes about immigration: Reduction.

(6) By itself, this will not be enough to fix the problem – the Government is hampered by EU rules and, as Mr Cameron says, the failures of a welfare and education system that has produced too few qualified workers. Ministers still look unlikely to reach their target of reducing net immigration to "tens of thousands" before the next election. But they certainly deserve much credit for their sustained efforts to get to grips with a problem their predecessors simply ignored

The final paragraph of the editorial again expresses an opinion, as part of the *Telegraph's* model of the current situation in the UK, **presupposing** that there is a problem and that this problem must be fixed. But in this case, the problem is not attributed to Labour, but to EU rules, consistent with the Telegraph's negative attitude about the EU. Interesting is the observation on the (alleged) failures of the welfare and education system in the UK, because it is not explicitly attributed to Labour, as could be expected in the negative ideological logic of the editorial. But continuing the expressions of the general attitude on immigration, the newspaper seems to agree with the aim of a significant reduction of immigration. Finally, the **ideological polarization** between Conservative and Labour is again specified by the positive attitude about the current government with the explicit evaluation expressed as *deserve much credit*, *sustained efforts* and *get to grips,* and the negative attitude about Labour by repeating the evaluation that it *ignored* the problem of immigration – again presupposing that indeed there is a problem.

Conclusions of the sociocognitive analysis

In this brief sociocognitive analysis of some of the discursive structures of this editorial in the *Telegraph*, we have been able to observe how these structures are controlled by underlying models, knowledge, attitudes and ideologies. Global and local semantic coherence is controlled by a mental model representing policies of the current government about immigration, itself based on general, sociocultural knowledge about politics, policies, voters and governments, on the one hand, and on immigration on the other hand. Indeed, such a coherence could not be explained merely in terms of the meaning of words, but requires description and explanation in terms of underlying mental representations.

Secondly, consistent with its general genre properties (as applied in the context model controlling its appropriate production and comprehension), the editorial also formulates opinions and recommendations, and these are expressed on the basis of current opinions of the mental model of the current policies about immigration. This model is itself controlled by underlying conservative attitudes and ideologies, polarizing between Good Conservatives and Bad Labour, on the one hand, and between Good UK and Bad immigration (and even between good and bad immigrants). The lexical appraisal system and its coherence are thus based on the opinions in the mental model. These opinions are applications in the current situation of more general underlying *norms* (such as those of populist democracy) and *values* (about good and bad government in general, and about immigration policies in particular). The rhetorical enhancement of these appraisals, finally express the nature of ideological ingroup-outgroup polarization in discourse, namely by enhancing Our good things and Their bad things.

Many of the semantic properties of the editorial also need a more explicit sociocognitive analysis, as is the case for the *implications* and the *presuppositions* in the article – as defined by their presence in the mental model but not as expressed in the text. The same is true for the usual metaphors, e.g. about immigration and government actions against it, namely in terms of a threatening FLOOD in which we may all drown, if not for the energetic policies of the Conservative governments.

This kind of sociocognitive analysis shows first of all that a mere discourse analysis of topics, themes, local meanings, lexical items or appraisals, only yields very incomplete insights into the meanings and functions of the editorial. Crucial is to show and explain not only how it is produced or understood, but to specify the more detailed layers of cognitive control of the current mental model of the journalist, and how this mental model is itself controlled by socially shared attitudes about immigration, the Conservatives and Labour, and how these attitudes themselves are fundamentally controlled by underlying conservative ideologies. Obviously, these attitudes and ideologies not only are relevant to describe and explain the current editorial but more generally the opinions (part of models of specific events and situations) as expressed in other editorials.

Obviously, the sociocognitive analysis as presented is merely a more informal version of a more sophisticated analysis, which would require a detailed description of the underlying mental models, attitudes and ideologies, and their structures, and how exactly these structures directly or indirectly control discourse structures.

Although editorials are mainly about opinions, the analysis should finally not ignore the fundamental fact that all discourse, as is also the case here, is based on vast amounts of underlying knowledge, as explained above. In his case the knowledge about past and current immigration and immigration policies, as specified in the model, and more broadly on socioculturally shared knowledge about immigration, the UK, governments, policies, and so on – which all control the semantic coherence of the editorial.

Brief Sociopolitical Analysis

As we have seen above, Critical Discourse Studies generally relate discourse structures to social and political structures, and specifically to forms of power abuse. The specific claim of a sociocognitive approach is that such relations are mediated by the kind of sociocognitive analysis we have presented above.

Indeed, it would be a superficial shortcut to interpret the editorial only in terms of the *Telegraph* as a media organization, or of the profession of journalists, or their readers. Such a sociological analysis would allow us to make explicit the processes and interactions of news gathering, the internal organization and power structure of the

newspaper as an organization, the relations between newspapers and governments, as well as the role of newspapers in the lives of citizens, among many other topics.

Some of these social structures impinge on structures of discourse, such as the role of editorials as public discourse manifesting a relation between newspaper and government, as exemplified in the context model of writing editorials.

A more social and political analysis also would make explicit the conditions of access (of politicians) to the news media, as is the case for David Cameron's article to which the editorial refers. And finally, the most obvious sociopolitical aspect explaining the alignment of the *Telegraph* as a newspaper with the current government would be in terms of the political power structure in the UK, and the relations between media and politics.

Yet, much of such a social and political analysis of the media in general, and of the *Telegraph* and the Conservative government, in particular, in less macrostructural terms, would precisely involve a detailed analysis of public media discourse at the microlevel, namely *how* exactly the newspaper supports the government. We have seen that such a critical analysis is fundamentally incomplete without a sociocognitive analysis, for instance in terms of mental models, attitudes and ideologies.

If the *Telegraph* aligns itself with the Conservative government, this is not only through discourse, but more fundamentally by the attitudes and ideologies expressed in a coherent corpus of discourses, of editorials as well as of news articles. Such underlying representations control all aspects of the production of these discourses, and at the same time explain how the readers will read and understand the discourses, and construe their own mental models, partly also based on the same underlying attitudes and ideologies.

It is at this crucial point where the *critical* analysis of discourse becomes relevant. That a conservative newspaper supports a Conservative government is hardly surprising, even if we need to show, in detail, how this is done discursively and cognitively. The same is true for its critical stance about Labour.

But in this case, the editorial is hardly politically innocent, because it also deals with immigration. True, assuming that conservative organizations often oppose immigration, or are in favor of strict immigration controls, as shown in this editorial, may be expected. But the crucial point is that such public discourses may and do influence millions of readers, and that such readers (as the very editorial makes explicit)

also may be voters. Merely reading the newspaper, or even understanding the meaning of its discourses, is part of the general properties of media and communication. But by the explicit and persuasive expression of underlying attitudes and ideologies against immigration, it is more than likely that readers will form or reinforce their own negative attitudes on immigration.

More specifically, the newspaper not only conveys attitudes against immigration (e.g. on the basis of the job market), but more specifically against immigrants as 'abusing the system'. This is not an attitude most British readers can form on the basis of personal experiences (personal mental models), but an attitude they primarily acquire through the public discourse of (conservative) governments and media. And that kind of negative attitude, together with other ones about immigrants, is based on more fundamental xenophobic and racist ideologies.

In other words, the editorial not only formulates a conservative opinion on immigration policies, and thus not only aligns itself with the Conservative government, but **manipulates** its readers in the formation of xenophobic and racist attitudes and ideologies.

Much research on the reproduction of prejudice, discrimination and racism has shown that such attitudes and ideologies may result in many forms of everyday discrimination against immigrants. Indeed, if the *Telegraph* explicitly advocates to keep ('wrong') immigrants outside of the country, and collectively accuses immigrants of (welfare) abuses, then it is hardly surprising that its readers will want to keep immigrants out of their neighborhood, street, pub or family.

How and why this happens, and why a newspaper may have such ideological and manipulative power is (partly) shown by the kind of sociocognitive discourse analysis we have presented above. Of course, such an analysis needs to be expanded with a more general – and very complex -- analysis of how (what kind of) newspaper readers acquire their knowledge, opinions, attitudes and ideologies, and what the role is of the newspaper and the other media in this form of epistemic and ideological acquisition.

Obviously, we also know that media discourse is not automatically accepted by all the recipients, and that some recipients may resist or reject its opinions, attitudes and ideologies. Yet, on the issue of immigration, where many people have only indirect acquaintance of immigrants, and where the persuasive messages are not inconsistent the

daily experiences or the interests of the readers, such ideological influence may be pervasive – as research on general attitudes and prejudices on immigrants show.

These attitudes are not innate, but learned. And since not based on everyday experiences, such acquisition is by public discourse (or conversations with friends or family members in turn based on such discourse). Newspapers and television play a fundamental role in this kind of ideological manipulation by the symbolic elites.

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