

## Managing Relations: a study of positioning strategies in British international discourse

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This work deals with corpus-assisted research into speaker ideological positioning in the language of diplomacy. It concentrates on the resources used by the foreign minister Margaret Beckett to construe the speaker “orientation” (Lemke 1992) through the analysis of the main participant in the discourse that is *international community* and the subject matter being debated namely *terrorism*. The findings have shown assertiveness and determination from the speaker by the use of contractive mechanisms. The image of the international community is based on cooperation and unity just like a family and it is appraised mainly through judgements of tenacity. These are the resources required to fight terrorism always seen as an ever-present potential threat.

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### 1. The aim of the research

In a speech delivered in March 2007, the UK Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett maintained that globalization has blurred the boundaries between the domestic agenda and foreign policy. Security and prosperity at home can be guaranteed only by being active at the international level. Thus, the complexity of the global environment implies, as she states, a “360 degree diplomacy with the freedom and flexibility to demonstrate initiative and to work with partners across different governments, across Whitehall and across the broadest spectrum of British Society” (Margaret Beckett, March 20th, 2007).

Furthermore, the British Foreign Policy website <sup>1</sup> highlights the importance of public opinion, that is, the picture a country gives of itself, or its national/international reputation. Indeed, when dealing with international relations on political or military or business issues, governments communicate in a certain way trying to build up a positive image of their nation. Popular perception, or the way in which we notice and understand that image, values and motivations of a country, can create an enabling or disabling environment and, “perceptions of Western motivations as imperial or self-interested can damage the chances of success” (Leonard, 2002: 49). All transactions - whether promoting ideologies and values or selling products, are a way to feed off the general representation of a nation, that has recourse to public diplomacy to reinforce positive reputation among foreign people (*ibid.*). Strategic communication helps in that direction, increasing appreciation and influencing people’s behaviour. It is a truism that the analysis of the political argumentation and the organization of ideological contents is not a secondary aspect with respect to the political action, but on the contrary, communication is an integral part of the political action, it is action itself (cf. Marrone 2001: 222).

Embracing Fairclough’s perspective that transformations in social life are led by discourse (2006a: 24-25), this study deals with the specialized discourse of diplomacy as expressing the foreign policy of a country. The aim of the research is to contribute to ‘denaturalise’ (see Fairclough 2006a) the phenomenon of ideology in a small specialized corpus of English diplomatic speeches. This contribution will focus on how this type of discourse reflects the value system of the speakers and their community through the study of the

evaluative strategies used to appraise one of the main participants in the international setting, namely the ‘international community’. Just as we observe the discourse from our own ideological positions, speakers and writers take different stances in relation to the propositions they make. This analysis employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA henceforth), as a central methodological tool to deconstruct texts in terms of discursive features, but it also combines Corpus Linguistics and Functional Grammar. In particular, the work tries to provide insights in the construction of their national image and the value systems explicitly or implicitly reflected in the language through the foreign ministers’ attitudinal position against terrorism.

In her speeches Beckett for instance, positions the audience to take a negative view of *terrorists* via an overt ‘inscribing’ of authorial viewpoint (Martin 2000), namely through its association to the ideologically loaded term *extremists*, by which the behaviour of this group is explicitly characterised as beyond the bounds of the socially acceptable. After introducing the discourse of diplomacy with relevant literature in section 2, the data and the analytical methods of investigation will be focused on in section 3. Section 4 exemplifies findings about the appraisal of the key items ‘international community’ and ‘terrorism’ and conclusions will be drawn up in the final section of this work.



## 2. The language of diplomacy and relevant literature

The terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup> have changed everything in the international scenario and marked the birth of the third phase of foreign policy. The first phase dates back to the cold war, a period characterised by super power diplomacy whereas the second started after the collapse of communism in Europe in the 1990s.<sup>2</sup> In the meanwhile the communication revolution, which has also brought benefits to terrorist organizations, the increasing awareness of environmental issues and problems of poverty have changed priorities in the international agenda. Thus, the function of diplomats is to represent the view of their government, of their nation and their work is essentially based on gestures and words, “words, which can mean different things to different people, or even change from place to place, or from time to time, carry not only sound but intention” (Abu Jaber, 2001).

The language of diplomacy is thus a refinement of language as a medium of communication, “Its formalisation into special patterns, with a chosen cadence and sometimes repetitive pattern is, and has been designed to oil the joints of relationships between people and nations” (*ibid.*;). The *Collins Cobuild Dictionary* defines diplomacy as “the activity or profession of managing relations between the governments of different countries...the skill of being careful to say or do things which will not offend people”. Indeed, it is the art of persuading the others to accept one's own ideas or to move people from mood to mood. Hence, in this type of discourse, argumentation plays a very important role, a skilful use of evaluative expressions is required, and propositions are continually assessed in terms of beliefs and goals of the speaker and of the discourse community.

From a linguistic perspective, the value system may be analysed in terms of evaluation (Hunston 1989). Evaluation can be examined from many perspectives such as the analysis of the contents of the evaluations made, pursuing the aim of perceiving the value systems underlying the text and expressed through it. This approach, more semantically oriented, is set within the objectives of CDA whose main challenge is to uncover the ideological system behind texts (Fowler 1991; Fairclough 1989; Simpson 1993). A second perspective

considers how evaluative meanings are lexico-grammatically encoded (Biber and Finnegan 1986; Biber and Conrad 2000; Hunston and Sinclair 2000; White 2006) whereas the last approach focuses on where evaluation is located in a text (Hoey 2001). In this paper the first perspective will be considered to study the content of evaluation and the linguistic forms through which evaluative meanings are realised. In other words, relevant evaluative patterns by which the reader is placed in the position of accepting or disfavours a specific attitude will be pointed out by combining different methodological approaches. As far as ideologies are concerned, this work supports Van Dijk’s perspective considering them as the “basis of social representations shared by members of a group” (2000: 8). Considered as system of beliefs, ideologies perform identifying tasks and represent the basic social characteristics of a group such as their objectives, values and norms. Hence, discourse is the main analytical category, since it allows the combination of the text structural organization with the social practices set up in specific communicative situations, but also at institutional and more general social level (see Donadio, 2004: 22).



### 3. Methods and Data

#### 3.1 The data

The data for the analysis come from a specialized corpus which includes the speeches delivered by Margaret Beckett about terrorism during her tenure as Foreign Minister. The texts were downloaded from the internet archive of the FCO ([www.fco.gov.uk](http://www.fco.gov.uk)). Details of the corpus are displayed in Table 1:

**Table 1. British diplomatic corpus about terrorism:**

Foreign Secretary	Text-typology	tokens	years
<i>Margaret Beckett</i>	25 speeches	64,780	May 2006-June 2007

Diplomatic speeches were investigated in that they deal with the delicate task of explaining clearly the tactical choices made with respect to international issues, in this case terrorism. In fact, “Foreign ministries are located at the interstice of a complex transformation in the external and domestic environment in world affairs”<sup>3</sup> and, when illustrating their foreign policy strategies, they also aim to persuade people at home and abroad that they are working in a particular way for the good of the country.

The selection of speeches was governed by typing the word 'terrorism' in the search box on both websites and all the documents dealing with this topic were listed. The speeches were delivered in institutional locations at the FCO or on some international events and all of them are part of official communicative settings. In other words, all the speeches were properly prepared for institutional and public purposes and were structured and targeted for a selected audience. It is important to point out here that transcriptions of speeches are not considered as real spoken discourse because they are prepared and because they omit some important features such as information about intonation, pauses and overlappings (Slembrouck 1992).

#### 3.2 The methodological approach: corpus-assisted Appraisal Analysis

This study, set in the recent tradition which combines corpus linguistics and discourse analysis (Koller and Mautner 2005; Bayley 2007; Miller 2007), relies on the assumption

that browsing through corpora can reveal collocational patterns that may work as pointers to larger discursive processes, of which instances of ideological value positions are usually part. Thus, stretches of discourse identified through the use of a concordancer constitute the background for a detailed qualitative diagnosis of the instantiation enacted through the texts, in this case with the help of the analytical framework of the Appraisal theory. It is worth underlining that the computer program (*WordSmith Tools* 2007) was used mainly for searching, retrieving and counting, but the analysis remains an intensive manual labour.

An inductive approach was thus used to have a general view of the corpus and to identify lexical items to start the analysis driven by the criterion of frequency. Predictably, in the corpus, the cluster floating to the top of the wordlist, is *international community*. The second choice of investigating the lemma *terrorism* and its word-forms was governed by the fact that evaluation may be also analysed 'conceptually', and this term represents the main topic we are dealing with and thus the 'evaluated thing'. Furthermore, the choice of terrorism and its word-forms was also due to the fact that looking at specialised lexis contributes "to common ground and shared knowledge" (Pocini, 2004: 147).

### 3.3 *The language of Appraisal*

Since it is via evaluative positioning that particular models of the social and moral order are constructed the APPRAISAL framework (labels for systems will be in capitals in all the paper) will be used to explore how judgements on people, on facts, on others' utterances are expressed in texts and how they may be more indirectly implied, presupposed or assumed. Thus, the main reason for adopting the appraisal framework is that it enables a comprehensive analysis of implicit as well as explicit speaker's attitude. It is beyond the scope of this paper to explain the framework in details since I shall be looking at resources of engagement and attitude. The model proposes three sub-domains of evaluative meaning that I shall be illustrating here, adopting Martin and White's terminology (White 2003; 2006<sup>4</sup>):

ATTITUDE, which refers to values by which positive or negative view points are activated, is further sub-divided into AFFECT, involving emotional reaction, JUDGEMENT, referring to assessments of human behaviour, and APPRECIATION, which looks at resources for constructing assessments of artefacts, texts, natural objects in terms of how they are assigned value socially. When the attitudinal positioning is explicit it is labelled 'attitudinal inscription', conversely, it is known as 'attitudinal token' and, in this case, evaluation is construed through mechanisms of 'association' and 'implication'.

It is worth calling to mind that the category of JUDGEMENT serves to appraise human behaviour by reference to a set of 'institutionalised norms' and thus, highly determined by cultural and ideological values. Two broad categories are here available: 'social esteem' - which has to do with 'normality, tenacity and capacity'- and 'social sanction', where 'criticism', 'veracity' and 'propriety' are contemplated (Martin and White 2005). APPRECIATION is also thought in terms of the institutionalisation of feeling, but here processes, phenomena and products are valued by reference to a set of social norms. APPRECIATION encompasses three 'variables': 'reaction (impact, quality), composition (balance and complexity) and valuation (impact, directness and validity)' (Martin and White 2005). Each of these sub-types may be conceptualised in negative or positive terms. ENGAGEMENT refers to all the resources by which "the speakers/writers take a stance towards the various points-of-view and value position being referenced by the text and thereby align themselves vis-à-vis those who hold, or are represented as holding these positions" (White, 2003: 260).

#### 4. From Theory to Practice

Embracing a “phraseological approach” (Hunston 2006), the first step taken to investigate the data was to retrieve a list of multi-word units which are shown in Table 3:

**Table 3. 3-word cluster word-list in Beckett’s speeches**

<b>THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>ONE OF THE</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>THE MIDDLE EAST</b>	<b>51</b>
<b>THE EUROPEAN UNION</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>THE PEOPLE OF</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>IN THE WORLD</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>IT IS A</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>SOME OF THE</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>IN THE REGION</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>THAT IS WHY</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>WE HAVE TO</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>THE PRIME MINISTER</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>IN THE MIDDLE</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>THERE IS A</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>WE NEED TO</b>	<b>23</b>



It is worth pointing out that these associations of words do not reveal “the full nature of phraseology” (Scott and Trimble 2006:19) but a set of repeated chunks of language. Some of the clusters in the table are grammatical patterns such as *it is a*, *we have to*, others may be seen as relatively fixed phrases like *one of the*, *that is why*, which seem to indicate the argumentative nature of the corpus. Another group of multi-word units is represented by participants in the discourse of terrorism like *the international community*, *the middle east*, *the people of* and so on. The analysis starts from the first of those. The basic principle is that the repetition of particular formulations is a way in which 'value systems are structured and maintained' (Stubbs, 2001: 166).

##### 4.1 Appraising *international community*

Taking frequency as a point of departure, *international* is the most frequent word in the corpus (0,34%) and even though *community* is its preferred collocate (36%), lexical variation is given by the company of other friends such as *partners* and *force*. An investigation of the collocates of these lexical items in the Bank of English has revealed, as felt by Fairclough’s sense of provenance, that different discourses come into the picture here (cf. Fairclough, 2007: 46). Whereas 'community' is more frequently used within politics, 'force' emanates from the military discourse and 'partner/s' evokes business provenance. This means that, in Beckett's language, these words are textured as members of the same class in order to advocate unity and solidarity from any perspective, in this

case military, economic and political sharing.

The advocacy for co-operation at the international level is pervasive in the speeches and the concept of *international community*, as a unique institutionalised coalition, is often reinforced by the pre-modifying adjective *entire* or by the phrase *as a whole*. Sometimes the ‘redundancy’ gives rise to ‘overwording’ (Fairclough, 1989: 115) as in example 3, due to the occurrence of *as a whole, not just...*, and *all*. This shows emphasis on ‘internationalism’:

(1) The **international community** as a whole - not just the US and the UK - all believed that he had and wished to further develop his WMD capability. [t- judgement:+tenacity]

Determination is one of the two semantic broad motifs around which the appraisal of the *international community* is primarily organized. Interestingly, example (1) does not contain ‘inscribed attitude’, but considering the cultural assumption that developing weapons of mass destruction is cruel and dishonest, the experiential content drives the recipients to disfavour the enemy’s choice. The token of evoked JUDGEMENT becomes ‘inscribed’ in instance (2) where an equation is established between UK and the international community by the means of a relational process:

(2) The Afghan government and people too want security, development and good governance. The UK and the **international community** are determined to help them achieve that. [judgement:+tenacity]

(3) It is plain even to the government of Iran that the entire international community calls on Iran to meet its obligations. [t- judgement:+tenacity]

(4) showing that the entire international community was willing to welcome Iran back into its ranks provided that it conformed to international norms on the nuclear file and elsewhere. [t- judgement:+tenacity]

In the other two instances, the impersonal construction *It is plain* (3) followed by the intensifier *even*, conveys evaluation from the speaker who objectivises the perseverance of the community’s institutional duty and its inclination through the modalized formulation *was willing* (4).

This coalition implies the existence of the opposite phenomenon, (Fairclough calls it ‘isolationism’, 2007:46) namely, all those who are not with the allied countries are against them. This is one of the means to cultivate the well-known strategy of ‘positive self-representation vs negative other-representation’ (Fairclough 1989; 2006; Van Dijk 2007). In order to arouse the audience’s empathy, the speaker points out that there is no dichotomy between national interests and global interests, but the latter incorporates the former. Example 5 is attitudinal in that it orients the recipients to view this cooperation in a positive light. This is achieved by including words (*responsibility*) and relational formulations (*self-interest...inseparable from common interest*) which, given a particular set of cultural assumptions and expectations, feature this community as the only preserver of all countries’ interests. The ideological significance here is that the dominant interests are presented as the interests of humanity as a whole, and the discourse construes

expressions undermining them. In fact, again ‘overwording’ is given here by semantically related words, *threats*, *dangers* and *risks*, (*Collins Colbuild* dictionary gives them as synonyms) whose aim is to set up an atmosphere of fear:

(5) When I spoke at the John Hopkins University at the beginning of summer I called for 'a globalisation of responsibility' - an understanding, in other words, that in a world of global threats, dangers and risks, the self-interest of individual countries is inseparable from the common interest of the **international community** as a whole.

In contrast to the extremes of Thatcherite individualism, (see Donadio 2005) which rejects individual liberty, the so-called ‘third-way’ envisioned a society whose members have responsibilities and rights. In a globalising world foreign policy has to be guided by a more subtle blend of mutual and self-interest and moral purpose in defending the values we cherish. The fact that we live in a ‘dangerous world’ puts people in the need for protection and gives the community a sense of greater responsibility. In this strategy of serving self-interest by fighting for ‘our values’, the speaker construes a positive British image by highlighting once again the same tenacity which characterizes the international community:

(6) The UK and the **international community** continue to support the Palestinian people. [t- judgement:+tenacity]

(7) we have been leading the **international community's** efforts to resolve this crisis. [t- judgement:+tenacity]

Also in these examples the speaker expresses JUDGEMENTS through a combination of experiential meaning and tokens of appraisal which highlight her nation’s perseverance (*continue*) and resolution (*resolve*). It is worth noticing the thematic position of the subject that takes on responsibility and active role for being successful.

The second broad semantic domain on which appraisal is based is the family union:

(8) If as an **international community** we fail to build the pillars of global security: [-capacity] food security, water security, energy security, climate security then we are living in a house with extremely shaky foundations indeed. Put simply it is as a human race that it is now clear that united we stand, divided we fall.

The negatively evaluated potential scenario, worded through a token of incapacity, has little chance of being attractive to the receiver. The *united community* is responsible for the security of humanity in every field, from trade to climate, and its work is identified in terms of construction of a house with good and stable foundations: its disunity, and thus failure, leads to insecurity and vulnerability. Citation 8 may be seen as an instance of 'attitudinal inscription' via analogy or metaphor. First of all this 'internationalism' sounds as 'fully inclusive' (see Fairclough 2007) through the analogy of 'we as a community' and then the presence of the speaker is made more salient by the introduction of the 'building' metaphor' where, the community as a whole, the human race, is the responsible for the

strong roots of the global security, but it is a responsibility that involves everybody. Hence, the coinage of the phrase ‘globalisation of responsibility’. The presence of a negative token like *shaky* is particular instrumental here since it relies on the social value of ‘unity is strength’, explicitly stated in the same example or elsewhere in the corpus, where the resort to *family* (example 9) transforms the abstract concept of ‘international community’ into something more concrete or at least closer to us. Indeed, “the family has a long history as a solidarity metaphor to bring together people who have a common set of beliefs or a mutual political interest” (Bloor and Bloor, 2007: 75):

(9) But because this family of insecurities can only be addressed by a world community understanding our responsibilities one to another, understanding that self interest and common interest go hand in hand, we need nothing less than a globalisation of responsibility. United we stand, divided we fall - one of the oldest political slogans - one of the simplest. But in these times ‘we’ are not a small group or a small community. We are the whole human family.

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As far as ENGAGEMENT is concerned, resources of dialogic expansion seem to be basically non-existent in the discourse of *international community*. Even those instances, which can be interpreted as ‘entertaining’, function as contracting the speaker’s proposition on a closer investigation, as in example (10):

(10) But there are those who would argue that any talk of a global common agenda falls at the first hurdle of Iraq or of Afghanistan: that the lessons to be learned from those countries are that the international community is better off not getting involved. I believe that the exact opposite is true.

In this citation the speaker presents a possibility that is immediately rejected in the following clause, introduced by the modalized verbal form *I believe*, which conveys a strong commitment to her position. Similarly, in the following examples the textual voice is highly invested by setting up a hypothesised scenario of failure that nobody would accept:

(11) But the important point is this: in none of these areas will we stand a chance of success unless the **international community** is united in purpose and in action.

(12) But if, on the other hand, Iran continues to defy the IAEA and the Security Council, it should be in no doubt that that relationship will deteriorate, and that the **international community** will seek to respond.

(13) There is virtually no-one that would argue that the international community should be less engaged in the Middle East Peace Process.

(14) What stands out with utter clarity is that any or all of these different issues and events can be addressed, let alone resolved, only if we seek the maximum amount of common ground and co-operation from the **international community** as a whole.



(15) This is what I have meant when I have spoken before of a globalisation of responsibility - an understanding that the global security threats which the **international community** faces will only become more frequent and more acute unless we deal, together as an **international community**, with the insecurities which invariably underlie them.

(16) But if we had made a concerted effort, committed ourselves for the long-term we could have started to make progress. The **international community** didn't do that.

As it can be noticed the formulations here are via 'declarative sentences' containing conditional clauses: again solidarity and union are the 'condicio sine qua non' to win against terrorism. Interestingly, her stance is constructed through contractive resources reinforced by an objectivised comment in thematic position that excludes any alternative views. What contributes to contract her proposition is the use of a deontic modality. Even those epistemic options of likeness "are almost invariably couched in grammatical facts and thus are also contractive" (Miller 2004: 12). The Foreign Secretary presents her proposals as unquestionable, not open to negotiation, and supports them through historical facts. Citation (16) illustrates the point by presenting the bad consequences of a lack of *concerted efforts*. The speaker refers to the situation in Afghanistan in the 1990s. Thus, evaluative position is activated via an association of experiential and interpersonal meaning through a strategy of Denial.

Commitment and support shown in the course of history lends the international community a character of reliability, capacity and reasonableness and thus social esteem.

#### 4.4 Evaluating *terrorism*

*Terrorism* is the most frequent word-form (67 occurrences) with respect to the lemma *terror* (4 occurrences) and to both, the singular noun *terrorist* (25) and the plural noun *terrorists* (16). Here the four instances of the lemma *terror* are always collocated with words striking *fear* and *violence*, seen as 'weapons' to fight, and it is associated to despotic regimes (citation 4) like in Iraq, a country destroyed by this type of repressive government. The position of *terror* at the end of the sentence, mostly as complement, reveals that it is something coming from 'others' (*they; Hezbollah; Al Qaeda*) as shown in the following instances:

(1) they seem to concentrate only on fear and **terror**, and it is

(2) Hezbollah's principal weapons are **terror** and violence,

(3) the widespread phenomenon of Al Qaeda-inspired **terror**.

(4) in a country which has been riven by decades of **terror** and oppression and

If *terror* activates a sort of emotive and great fear reaction, *terrorism* represents the real problematic issue and as Jackson argues, the words *terrorism* or *terrorist* are more associated to the description of "the illegitimate acts of individuals or small groups of dissidents" (2005: 23) as is the case in my corpus. Indeed, the listener is positioned to share

the speaker's viewpoint by this ever-present menace of terrorism. The lemma *threat* appears 26 times and 10 times in the vicinity of terrorism/st giving rise to the 'canonical form' (for this terminology see Cheng *et al* 2006) 'the threat we face from terrorism'. This *threat* is appraised as *high, serious, global*, (as displayed in the concordances below) and thus it denotes 'concern' from the speaker.

(5)has a deep understanding of the nature of the **terrorist**  
threat we face

(6)because the threat we face from **terrorism** and extremism is a  
global threat,

(7)the threat which we both face from **terrorism** remains high.

(8)The threat from that international Islamist **terrorism** remains  
serious

The 'prototypical or canonical form' allows 'constituency variation' with *challenge/s* at the place of *threat*:

(11) of this very conference - globalisation. The challenges we  
face - **terrorism**, climate change,

(12) Commons yesterday, the international challenges that we  
face - global **terrorism**, nuclear

Generally speaking, a 'challenge' is "something new and difficult which requires great effort and determination" (*Collins Cobuild Dictionary*), but it also requires a response. As Campbell maintains (1998), one of the main function of the foreign policy is to adopt a perpetual discourse of fear and danger so as to widen the self/other distance and to build up a collective identity. The purpose seems to be that of spreading panic and visualize the real consequences of this threat in everyday life:

(13) The less successful we are in fighting **terrorism** - the more  
scared we are to walk down the street or travel by plane or get  
on the tube - the less able we will all be to enjoy those rights  
and freedoms.

Here the speaker manipulates the structure of her message in order to mark the starting point of each sentence. She employs three parallel repeated comparative judgements, putting them in 'thematic position' (Halliday 1995) to highlight her evaluative points. She could have used a conditional clause for example, to convey the same meaning, but these paralleled structured formulations help to keep in mind the results of failing with terrorism. The focus is on the value of freedom exemplified through the representation of ordinary events.

The overriding fear requires protection and action, thus the nation-state spares no efforts to set up different strategies. *Counter-terrorism* is the most frequent cluster in which *terrorism* is embedded in the corpus and, interestingly, the phrase *human rights* is often in its environment:

(14) Let me give two examples that illustrate how **counter-terrorism** and human rights can and must reinforce each other.

(15) And effective **counter-terrorism** means effective human rights. [reaction: +impact]

(16) Human rights also plays an integral part in the area of 'hard security' with the most direct impact here in the UK - the fight against **terrorism**. I think we should dismiss the false paradigm that **counter-terrorism** work and human rights are some sort of zero sum game. [reaction: +impact]

(17) If we construct a **counter-terrorism** strategy that ignores human rights, then that policy will fail - because we know that human rights abuse provides a fertile ground for radicalisation and extremism; and because we know that bad human rights can lead to failed states which in their turn can offer a safe haven for **terrorists**.

The fight against terrorism is here built upon the basic moral standards without which people cannot live in dignity and honour. The opposite, namely the human rights abuse, leads directly to terrorism or extremism and radicalism. Evaluation is here constructed in terms of 'what is good' and 'what is bad' that can be also defined in terms of goal-achievement (Hunston and Thompson, 2000: 14) but also in terms of 'reaction with a positive impact'. The equation displayed in example (15), which employs the positive appreciation *effective*, gives rise to a sort of implicit syllogism: successful achievement of anti-terrorism strategy implies respect of human rights and those who are not respectful of human rights behave like terrorists, in the sense that treat the others as if they were not human beings. Example (17) construes the hypothesised scenario of 'what will happen if..' also found in the environment of the *international community* and which seems to be typical of this type of diplomatic discourse.

Evaluatively speaking, example (16) contributes to increase positive attitude through appreciation by the use of a metaphor and, in doing so the message becomes clear: counter-terrorism does not exclude human rights, it is possible for both to win. The concept of 'non zero-sum game' refers to a 'theory used by modern states as formulated by the former US President Bill Clinton':

The more complex societies get and the more complex the networks of interdependence within and beyond community and national borders get, the more people are forced in their own interests to find non-zero-sum solutions. That is, win-win solutions instead of win-lose solutions.... Because we find as our interdependence increases that, on the whole, we do better when other people do better as well — so we have to find ways that we can all win, we have to accommodate each other.... Bill Clinton, Wired interview, December 2000 (from Wikipedia, downloaded on August 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007).

Understanding the nature of terrorism helps to combat it and giving explanations about it attracts people to share the speaker's position. Intertextual elements are thus involved and an explicit comparison with Irish terrorism helps to realise the entity of this negative threat:

(18) International **terrorism** today is different from, to take a previous UK example, Irish **terrorism**. It does not have that same connection to a single national cause or still more to an

achievable political demand. Rather it seems to be based on a pseudo-religious vision of a transformed world.

The use of the prefix *pseudo*, which carries negative assessment, implies that extremists' vision of the world is supported by a false interpretation of their religious creed. Evaluation is here enacted in terms of experiential meaning and bare assertion. The initial monogloss construes solidarity in that it presents the comparison between the two phenomena as uncontentious.

As far as the ideological word *terrorists* is concerned, most of the formulations which contain it may be seen as examples of 'attitudinal inscription'. The linguistic context of this word contains items from various semantic sets with very negative connotations that, occurring together, have a cumulative negative evaluative effect, as in the following citations having *terrorist*\* as node. A glance at them gives the chance to trace a real identity of *terrorists* whose assessment is based on values of social sanction, ethical values like dishonesty, immorality, cruelty. In fact they are described as extremists (1), as murderers (2), as violent (3), as destroyers of important values (4), as warmongers and savage (5), and as criminals (6). Ordinary life is thus threatened (examples 1 and 6) and the western response can be only of one type, in other words there is no alternative to military intervention:

(1) Extremists and **terrorists** use these conflicts as a propaganda and recruiting tool [propriety:-ethics]

(2) In July ordinary men and women on their way to work in this city were murdered by **terrorists** and a year earlier, Londoners had faced a tragically similar attack. [propriety:-ethics]

(3) And there is no doubt that the levels of violence by **terrorists** in Iraq are blighting the lives of many Muslims [propriety:-ethics]

(4) We have to be as determined and unflinching in our defence of those values as the **terrorists** are desperate to destroy them.

(5) the **terrorists** have no interest in the nationality or religion of their victims just as they have no interest in the progress of peace or in resolving conflict. In the face of such savagery, unity is our greatest strength. [propriety:-ethics]

(6) But let us deny the **terrorists** the historical importance they claim to themselves. They have no right to speak for the great and noble faith of Islam. This is a not a battle between civilisations but a stand-off between the whole of society on the one hand and a fairly small and particularly nasty bunch of murderers and criminals on the others. [propriety:-ethics]

By contrast all the opposite adjectives characterize the British, and the global community's identity, a contrast that is clearly stated, as in citation 4, through the use of the explicit positive attitudinal inscriptions *determined* and *unflinching*. These two instances of JUDGEMENT rely on the social value of tenacity which comes out again in the instance 7 via experiential content:

(7) In Kosovo we were part of a NATO action, alongside the United States. We acted together too with other allies in Afghanistan to oust a regime that harboured **terrorists**; and in Iraq to remove a dictator who was defying the will of the international community. In each case military action has been necessary.

The involvement of important ethical values such as fairness and justice as well leads to a response which cannot be different from military intervention supported by the ever-present menace of terrorism in *normal life* (example 9) where *ordinary men and women* (example 3) may become victims of it:

(8) **Terrorists** recognise no boundaries. In our response, neither can we. If we join forces, if through hard work and diplomacy we can stake out our common ground, our common values and defend them with resolve and with strength, then we will, together, defeat terrorism.

(9) I have no doubt that the **terrorists** imagined that these atrocities would cause a climate of fear, drive communities apart, bring normal life to a halt.

Example 3 points out another participant in the diplomatic action against terrorism that quite often occurs in the environment of *terrorist/s*, namely *Muslims*. Beckett underlines the presence of this community in Britain which amounts to nearly two million people in the country. As noticed in the investigation of the previous cluster, also in this case modality operates deontically.

Relying on the value of social openness and tolerance, the speaker employs a set of positive adjectives to mark the activity, the ability and cooperation of this community. The cumulative effect of positive JUDGEMENT, shown by the concordances 10, 11 and 12, is also reinforced by the position of ‘Muslims’ or the pronoun ‘they’ in thematic position and as protagonists in active sentences. Conversely, the only passive sentence is contained in example 10, where these people are seen as victims of terrorism. Here the choice of *sickened* contributes to invite the audience to participate to this community’s miserable condition, whose main fault is its *noble faith*. The contrast, or better the oxymoron, between *slur* and *noble* serves the aim of calling to mind the pseudo-religious motivations behind terrorists’ extremist behaviour. Islamic cooperation is so relevant that they work as ambassadors and help to bridge the distance between *they* and *us*:

(10) The Muslim communities in this country did not ask the **terrorists** to act in their name.

The vast majority are sickened by the slur on their great and noble faith. They make a huge and vital contribution to the life of this country.

And they, the Muslim communities, have a special ability to make a difference in the struggle against extremism.

Many travel to and from countries with large Muslim populations – particularly in South Asia.

They are the most powerful potential ambassadors for Britain.

(11) The greatest means we have of bridging the divide which the **terrorists** are trying to widen.

(12) When fellow Muslims speak up against extremism and correct the skewed world-view of the **terrorists**, it is much more powerful, much harder to dismiss than when those same words are spoken by a government minister.

This is in line with White's findings (2006: 44); he showed that the term 'extremist' has a stable meaning in the Bank of English, in that always associated "with allegations that groups or individuals have been involved in non-state sanctioned acts of political violence".

## 5. Concluding remarks

As shown, ideologies seen as 'systems of beliefs' may be expressed explicitly or implicitly and their understanding is a crucial issue in the translating process, because people interpret reality according to their cultural system of beliefs.

This specialised discourse is mainly persuasive in its nature, in that propositions are continually constructed and evaluated in terms of beliefs and goals, successes and failures. Appraisal has played a key role in the investigation and the findings have confirmed the general view that it helps the speaker/writer to orient the interlocutor to a given viewpoint. The use of the Appraisal Framework within the general perspective of CDA has proved useful to the identification of the speaker's preferred choices of encoding attitude through contractive resources primarily.

Appraised as having animate features (*united, tenacious, capable*) the investigation of *international community* has revealed values of social esteem frequently formulated as judgements. Explicit evaluation based on some relevant 'tokens' (*community, union, solidarity, family*) have identified the international community as a guardian of human values. The speaker exploits the 'expressive value' of the word *family* setting up a ubiquitous metaphor. As a normal family the community advocates for a *house* with 'stable foundations'. Judging positively the *international community* for its choices and strategies, values such as tenacity and capacity are pointed out in the speeches against the cruelty and criminality of terrorists, condemned on the basis of ethical values such as bad behaviour, immorality and evil. Furthermore, recipients are positioned to favour the international community's activity on the basis of the community of interests.

This institution is the main defender of the basic human values, such as the value of life that is always threatened by terrorism. This is achieved by mentioning 'normality' through formulations such as *ordinary men and women, normal life, go to work, tube*. Ethical values come into the picture and the *terrorists'* immorality and criminality may require military intervention if necessary.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>1</sup> The website address is : <http://fpc.org.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> A detailed description of the evolution of foreign policy is given by Michael Jay in his speech at the London School of Economics on 27/07/06 from where I paraphrased the information given in this section.

<sup>3</sup> International Conference: “Foreign Ministries: Adaptation to a Changing World” – June 14-16, 2007 – website:  
[www.diplomacy.edu/conferences/MFA2007](http://www.diplomacy.edu/conferences/MFA2007)

<sup>4</sup> For the study of the Appraisal Theory the website consulted is <http://grammatics.com/appraisal/index.html>