'LEGITIMATE THINKING': USING METAPHORS AND FUZZY CONCEPTS TO RADICALISE THE AUDIENCE

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As has been posited by Schneider (2016: 87) and various other scholar's metaphors "play a key role in the construction of social and political reality". Lakoff and Johnson (2003: 236), for example, believe that, "Like other metaphors, political and economic metaphors can hide aspects of reality. But in the area of politics and economics, metaphors matter more because they constrain our lives". In politics, when used skilfully, metaphorical language in particular may fulfil a persuasive function (Semino 2008: 85). However, persuasion is only likely to be successful when the ground is fertile, that is when the audience is ready to be persuaded. Much may be achieved in this domain by appealing to people's vague sense of values. What is somewhat surprising is that when invoking equivocal terms and employing fuzzy concepts, both politicians and journalists seem to be able to tap into people's conceptual systems and gain their attention in almost inexplicable ways. It appears that in multicultural countries, where values are diverse since different systems function side by side, politicians still refer to religious and patriotic values as if they were shared by the whole populations of these countries. Ultimately, through the process of legitimisation and delegitimisation, those in authority, whether moral or political, further their views and agendas by assuring their audiences that they know what is best for them.

In this paper, I intend to discuss certain linguistic strategies employed in the process of radicalisation. I question the very term radicalisation, which has come to be associated with fundamentalist Muslim groups, but which, in my view, should not be confined to this usage. In addition, I concur with Julian Baginni (*The Guardian*, July 13, 2014), who argued that "radicalisation is not brainwashing". Finally, an attempt will be made to demonstrate that western politicians and the press are guilty of the radicalisation of people who harbour nationalistic views, if, that is, one accepts the popular definition of radicalisation.

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1. Language, politics and emotional contexts

Although language is a rudimentary means for everyday communication, a variety of daily activities, particularly those which are audience-free, do not require the use of language for a person to be able to perform a particular set of tasks. Also, emotions, to a degree, may be independent of language. A particular emotional state can be brought about by a situation, scene, event or a combination of factors of a non-verbal nature. This, however, is not generally the case with politics, whose ties with language are rather stronger. Though ideology may, at least in part, be conveyed and reinforced by particular images, political manifestos, treatises, programmes, narratives and debates obviously require language. This has been summarised by McDonald (2004: 305) who states:

> Cultural activities, with a few exceptions, are non-linguistic. Building a house, painting a portrait, farming, scientific experimentation, military manoeuvres, health examinations, games and so on are examples of the many activities of a society or culture that do not involve language. […] Further, there are activities of a society that are distinctly linguistic, for example journalism, political oratory and the like.

Similarly, with regard to language and politics, Chilton and Schäffner (2002: 3) note: "[W]hat is clear is that political activity does not exist without the use of language. It is true that other behaviours are involved: for instance, physical coercion. But the doing of politics is predominantly constituted in language". While physical coercion may still be used in certain countries, verbal manipulation of a coercive kind is far from unknown in the western world, particularly when such emotions as fear and anguish are verbalised in the discourse. Indeed, as far as the combined effects on an audience are concerned, there can be little doubt that language, emotions and politics form a powerful trio. Castells (2013: 146) observes that: "Political cognition is emotionally shaped". Furthermore, once political language employs metaphor, the effects on its recipients are likely to be heightened since "metaphor is a particularly important

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linguistic and conceptual tool for the achievement of persuasion" (Semino 2008: 85).

Although it might appear that particular news is published or broadcast with a view to generating interest in the audience, the function of the news goes far beyond its dissemination. Being a commodity, a news story is likely to fulfil an additional role. At the fingertips of sensationalistic newscasters, or at least newscasters of a particular political leaning, the news is transformed into a view-formation vehicle (van Dijk 1987: 41). It seems that particular social and political contexts as well as the general milieu become contributory factors in this process. Thus an item of news or a story is not wholly about itself; rather, it becomes a channel for persuasion.

Politics is one of the sensitive areas which can arouse, and thus frequently relies on, strong emotions. For example, in the case of campaigns and other political activities, evocative language can be compared to a subtle musical instrument capable of playing tunes which may captivate an audience. Not surprisingly, political actors and journalists have mastered the ability precisely to resonate the right tones to reach and affect the conceptual domains of their recipients. For example, metaphors are frequently employed in inaugural presidential speeches because they strengthen the invoked images since they appeal directly to the subconscious mind. Wilson (1990: 127) considers the use of metaphorical language by George Bush, who in his inaugural address of 1989 employed metaphors of change and rebirth: *a world refreshed with freedom, ideas blown away like leaves*, and *new ground to be broken*. These particular metaphors are framed in the cultural concept of beginning/start/commencement, which is intricately connected with people's experience of *newness*, and they are representative of both expectation and hope. The new is mapped onto the hope people invest in something that is about to start. The way people perceive change may be explained by the following chain of reasoning: the new offers change → change offers something new → the new offers possibility and thus hope → hope is synonymous with the expectation of good things to come. People rejoice and celebrate such moments as births, birthdays, New Year's Eve, new jobs, weddings, and many other 'new' moments. Such moments are embedded in culture; they are symbolic and thus create a powerful effect on the audience.

On the political scene, a recently elected president also represents new hope for a nation. During political campaigns or moments of significance to the nation, politicians often shower their audience with mellifluous phrases which embellish their narratives and render people more receptive to their messages,

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particularly the subliminal ones. The news is a sellable commodity tailored to audiences by the forces involved in its shaping. Nimmo (1978, in Jabłoński 2006: 70) would appear to agree with this stating that the news is 'the joint creation' of the agents involved in its formation – the final product being the result of a compromise between politicians, news agencies, reporters and journalists.

In order for politically charged news items to *get home*, they tend follow certain principles. P. J. Crawley, writing in *The Guardian*, points out that, "A successful narrative can shape public opinion and drive at least perceptions of winners and losers. But to be truly effective, words and actions must be consistent."[1] So the images which the purveyors of a particular narrative conjure up in people's minds must be consistent with the actions taken by politicians to sustain them. The political actors who want to successfully transmit particular messages are liable to assessment and scrutiny by their audience. In his book on the *Art of Political Manipulation* Karwat (1998) suggests that to become an influential individual a political actor undergoes a process of so-called social 'accreditation'. Once a particular political player achieves a positive evaluation, then his or her audience will quite willingly accept his or her views. However, before such a person is 'anointed' or found 'creditable' (Karwat 1998: 7, 62-84) many somewhat subjective criteria must be met. Unfortunately, the 'attractiveness' of political actors is often deceptive because they tend to employ strategies of 'seduction' and – not infrequently – make false promises (Karwat 1998: 84-93).

Looking at the UK's decision to withdraw from the EU, at least to a section of the voters Brexit must have seemed a cause for hope and thus was perceived as highly desirable. Prominent pro-Brexit campaigners tantalised their audiences with the prospect of financial gain in the form of a £350m-a-week 'spending bonanza for the NHS'.[2] However, as became apparent such claims had no basis in fact:

> But despite the NHS pledge having been *at the heart of their message* in the run-up to the 23 June vote, and displayed on the official Vote Leave *battlebus*, the Change Britain website made no mention of the NHS in its manifesto about how to make a success of Brexit.

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1 https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/may/06/osama-bin-laden-obama-administration (accessed: July 6, 2011)

2 Toby Helm: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/sep/10/brexit-camp-abandons-350-million-pound-nhs-pledge (accessed: September 20, 2016)

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> Instead, Change Britain said on its "Brexit Means Brexit" page that any savings made as a result of no longer having to pay into the EU budget (assuming the UK leaves the single market) should be spent on guaranteeing "continued funding for farming, science, universities and poorer regions of the UK". The website was taken down, although cached versions of its pages were still accessible through search engines.[3]

In addition to the reassertion of British sovereignty, popularly expressed in terms of regaining control of the nation, other pledges included: fewer immigrants and lower energy bills. Some of the promises seemed to have tapped directly into people's prejudices, which had been developing over a period of time in which several EU crises had occurred. It thus seems reasonable to suggest that 'the Leave the EU' messages delivered at the time of the continuing EU refugee problem, had a strong hint of nationalistic, if not xenophobic, propaganda. What, however, seems particularly disturbing is the fact the political actors who blatantly ignored the NHS Brexit promise they made, still have much support.

2. If the news is 'bad'

> Daily news perpetually warns people about palpable dangers, while emotive phraseology conjures up vivid, almost tangible, images of pending economic disaster, elusive mass murderers or terrors to come. Fear, being innate, needs little conditioning and those who control the discourse of fear can facilitate it to influence their audience. (Dixon 2015a)

It would not be unreasonable to think that people prefer good rather than bad news; after all, positive stories have a more motivating and uplifting appeal. Even if it were not common practice, in medieval times the bearer of *ill news* would occasionally lose his life. In contemporary times, however, to the possible delight of certain audiences, the news tends to focus on traumatic events or sensational

[3] Toby Helm: https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/sep/10/brexit-camp-abandons-350-million-pound-nhs-pledge (italics added for emphasis) (accessed: September 20, 2016)

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items, such as tense political issues, economic recession, viruses/epidemics, rare diseases, disasters, tragedies and various cataclysms or calamities. A popular anecdote claims that a radio station dedicated to broadcasting only good news apparently went out of business very quickly.

According to Galtung and Ruge (1965: 69) people see the news as being predominantly negative: "When we claim that negative news will be preferred to positive news, we are saying nothing more sophisticated than what most people seem to refer to when they say that 'there is so little to be happy about in the news', etc.". Galtung and Ruge (1965: 69-70) propose four key reasons why negative news is more broadcastable:

- Negative news enters the news channel more easily because it satisfies the *frequency* criterion better.
- Negative news will more easily be *consensual* and *unambiguous* in the sense that there will be agreement about the interpretation of the event as negative.
- Negative news is said to be more *consonant* with at least some dominant pre-images of our time.
- Negative news is more *unexpected* than positive news, both in the sense that the events referred to are more rare, and in the sense that they are less predictable.

The first three reasons remain valid today. However, Galtung and Ruge's fourth reason that negative news is 'unexpected' (1965: 70) bears little relation to modern reality. Nowadays, when a vast amount of information is decidedly negative, it is *positive* news that would be found *unexpected,* and thus it would not attract much journalistic attention. This would also be in agreement with the principal idea of sensationalistic journalism: *Good news is no news, no news is bad news, bad news is good news* (Aleksandrowicz 2010: 17). A simple truth begins to emerge: sensationalistic journalism is not only desired by the media, it is also demanded by the audience as Glassner (2009: xii) remarks: "Atypical tragedies grab our attention while widespread problems go unaddressed". Whether the audience has come to enjoy this type of news of its own volition or whether it has been duped and trained to do so, continues to be researched.

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3. Metaphor, legitimisation and persuasive vagueness

Powerful players in the political arena have the advantage of being able to legitimise their own activities and delegitimise the activities of others, among whom there will be those who oppose them, threaten them/their community or simply espouse a different set of ideas. The basic principle at work is: those who represent power and authority are rarely challenged. This rule may be well illustrated by American presidents who, particularly when at war, seem to enjoy total immunity from domestic criticism. Not surprisingly, then, the USA's numerous enemies make its administration eager to launch pre-emptive strikes and deploy military forces under the banner of global security or democracy (Furedi 2006, Furedi 2007, Eco 2007, Chomsky 2007, Glassner 2009, Dixon pending). In recent decades the United States, has been permanently at war. In the 1980s, Reagan's administration proclaimed the need to wage *war on terrorism*. After 9/11, *terrorism* gave way to the more elusive *terror,* resulting in the *war on terror*. Currently, the same war, also known as Bush's war on terror, or the Global war on terror, is now frequently referred to as the *war against Islamic State*. Regardless of its name, the struggle against global terrorism is now fought with '*no front'*; it is the kind of war that Eco terms a *neowar* (2007: 11) – a struggle that is maintained rather than brought to a conclusion. This type of war appears to demand somewhat different tactics – the ethnic origin of the enemy has to be established and then the geographical region which harbours supposedly evil terrorists has to be identified. Thus the United States provides itself with a tangible territory to invade, while many American military operations are legitimised, as is noted by Chilton who calls this strategy "a *post facto* legitimisation of the action" (2004: 157). One particular case of military involvement – the American raid on Abbotabad in May of 2011 – resulted in worldwide criticism, including outrage even from some American commentators. However, this criticism elicited a rather abrupt response from Obama, who, with regard to bin Laden's elimination, said:

> Anyone who questions whether the terrorist mastermind didn't deserve his fate "needs to have their head examined"[4]

[4] (Ed Pilkington, Declan Walsh, Saeed Shah, http://www.theguardian.com/world/2011/may/09/obama-longest-40-minutes-life-bin-laden-raid) (accessed: May 11, 2011)

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Two conceptual metaphors seem to emerge from Obama's statement: PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SUPPORT ME/US (THE GOVERNMENT) ARE MAD as well as THOSE WHO ARE NOT WITH ME (THIS COUNTRY) ARE AGAINST ME (THIS COUNTRY). This kind of emotive response demonstrates several basic truths which correspond to various schemas related to power and influence:

(a) people in power seem immune to criticism
(b) power gives an advantage to those wielding it, as is schematised by the CONTROL IS UP (Lakoff and Johnson 2003: 17) and POWER IS UP metaphors
(c) people in power arrogate to themselves the right to issue value judgements which may discredit those who oppose them
(d) people in power tend to steer public opinion in directions that suit them
(e) people in power have obedient and deferential followers who defend their interests (Dixon 2015a).

Obama's statement is characterised by hyperbole, which, linguistically, is an "exaggeration used for some sort of special expressive (emotional, judgmental …) effect" (Barnden 2013). The emotive metaphor the PEOPLE WHO DO NOT SUPPORT ME/US (THE GOVERNMENT) ARE MAD is both ironic and defamatory. It precisely differentiates those who are true and honest Americans from those who doubt the morality of the act of eliminating a dangerous enemy. This kind of verbal manipulation is common, and has recently been employed by the Polish ultra-right Law and Order party (PiS). Having received an overall majority at the general election of October 2015, PiS rapidly introduced a series of controversial laws. After a number of protest marches (which PiS later outlawed) in May 2016, leaders of the party divided Polish citizens into two categories: 'the good and the bad sort', the bad sort being those in opposition to the government, who did not vote it in and who openly voice their dissent towards the its policies. The metaphorical concept of the THOSE WHO ARE NOT WITH US (THIS COUNTRY) ARE AGAINST US (THIS COUNTRY) applies again. The ease with which the 'good/bad sort' idea was instilled and the strength with which it has reverberated signifies how inherent in both language and culture the US and THEM schema is (Dixon 2015b).

Concerning manipulation and persuasion, van Dijk states:

> Obviously, the boundary between (illegitimate) manipulation and (legitimate) persuasion is fuzzy, and context dependent: some recipients may be manipulated

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> by a message that is unable to manipulate others. Also the same recipients may be more or less manipulable in different circumstances, states of mind, and so on. (van Dijk 2006: 361)

It is hard to disagree with van Dijk; however, historically much manipulation has frequently been given the earmark of persuasion, particularly when certain norms and values have been called upon. It can be argued that deeply held values act as conceptual *signposts* in people's minds. In the most general terms it may be said that values are encoded in the process of framing specific cultural concepts (good versus evil, morally right versus morally wrong, and many others). Manipulative framing, on the other hand, may be defined as the process of "selecting and highlighting some facets of events and issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and/or solution" (Entman 2004: 5, [in:] Castells 2013: 158). This strategy commonly exploits people's attachment to specific concepts and symbols.

In news reports on the terrorist attacks which took place between 2015-2017 (Paris, Nice, Rouen, Berlin, Westminster), several values are called upon. The following are extracts from David Cameron's speech[5] following the Paris attack of 13th November 2015:

> These were innocent victims enjoying a Friday night out with friends and family, no doubt at the end of a hard week. They were not seeking to harm anyone. They were simply going about *their way of life – our way of life*.
>
> And they were killed and injured by brutal, callous murderers who want to destroy *everything* our two countries *stand for*. *Peace*. *Tolerance*. *Liberty*.
>
> But we will not let them. We will redouble our efforts to wipe out this poisonous extremist ideology and, together with the French and our allies around the world, stand up for *all we believe in*.

[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/prime-minister-statement-on-paris-terror-attack (italics added for emphasis) (accessed: November 22, 2015)

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A degree of manipulation may be achieved by the deliberate use of the quantifiers *everything* and *all*. They are both inherently exaggerated and illogical, but they send a well-designed message, which emphasises absolutes, and those absolutes refer to values. The violent and emotive context makes the logical fallacy go unnoticed.

Furthermore, these short extracts are richly embellished with a selection of concepts that most people affected by the horror of the attacks would instantly and unquestioningly relate to. However, on closer inspection the values invoked by Cameron: *peace, tolerance, liberty*, let alone *our way of life* and *all we believe in*, if they were to be defined by a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural audience, no universal definitions would be obtained. Many vague linguistic and cultural concepts such as *love and hate*, as well as *peace, tolerance, liberty, way of life*, and *people's beliefs*, are recognizable, but they mean different things to different people. This does not mean, however, that they will not resonate with the audience. On the contrary, when political actors invoke fuzzy but culturally embedded values, they can easily trigger in their audience strong feelings of adherence to specific moral concepts. The act of triggering emotive responses seems more important than the act of recognition by the audience of particular values. Hence, the fact that the invoked concepts are represented by a different set of images in the minds of individual recipients is actually of little significance. At this point it may be worth mentioning that meaning is something that is not fixed. As Langacker (2013: 28) points out

> meanings are seen as emerging dynamically in discourse and social interaction. Rather than being fixed and predetermined, they are actively negotiated by interlocutors on the basis of the physical, linguistic, social, and cultural context. Meaning is not localised but distributed, aspects of it inhering in the speech community, in the pragmatic circumstances of the speech event, and in the surrounding world. In particular, it is not inside a single speaker's head.

This is particularly true when vague concepts and ideas are involved. Although the issue of meaning is considerably more complex, it may be said that most meaning construction takes place on a subconscious level and each person has a

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different experience of a given idea. The more abstract the idea, the more elusive its definition is likely to be. Moreover, the amount of contact with a given idea will differ greatly from person to person. In fact, the shape of the concept in a person's mind is largely the result of the sum of contexts in which that person has encountered a particular idea. Hence, if a person has direct experience of violent terrorism or at least a strong fear of being involved in an attack, this person's emotive reactions to the fuzzy concepts that Cameron draws upon in his speech, will be quite powerful. The reports of terrorist attacks coupled with their manner and frequency will have a significant influence on a large audience.

To demonstrate how fuzzy some concepts are, Janicki (2010: 83) discusses the phrase 'the American people':

> The kinds of sweeping generalisations that the phrase 'the American people' illustrates are intended to show how inadequate, misleading, and dramatically oversimplifying certain abstract words and sequences of words can be when they are used to refer to a very complex non-verbal reality. What can we assume the referent of 'the American people' is? All the American people? This is extremely unlikely. Given the complexity of the non-verbal reality (the roughly 300,000,000 Americans with all their different origins, domiciles, families, creeds, education, race, and so on), the abstract 'the American people' map refers to so much, that is, to so big a territory, that it may be taken to refer to nothing. When you ask the question 'who'?, that is, if you think of the territory to which the map 'The American people' refers, the territory is too complex for the expression to be a helpful map. The difference among the American people makes a difference. That is why expressions such as 'the American people' can be seen as very poor tools to handle non-verbal reality.

In his book *Confusing Discourse*, Janicki (2010) makes many observations regarding language, seeing it as being an insufficiently adequate tool for exacting meaning: "Our language appears static, and the non-verbal reality dynamic. Our language does not offer enough words to match the complexity of reality; it does not include 'words' to refer to every different aspect of reality" (Janicki 2010: 80).

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It may be a slight exaggeration to say that language or its lexicon is not evolving sufficiently dynamically because the rate of linguistic change depends largely on the speakers, who adjust the language according to their needs.

4. Language, politics, power and dominance

Many people among the diverse audiences for the news are unaware of the amount of manipulation they are subjected to. A low level of education combined with people's inability to recognise elaborate lies and promises make people more vulnerable to political manipulation and thus domination. That the language of politics is the language of power through persuasion is hardly surprising:

> One of the main ways in which power can be gained, maintained or undermined is by affecting others' views and behaviour, i.e. by getting others to hold views (that may lead to actions) that are advantageous to a particular individual, group or cause. The general rhetorical goal of persuasion, in other words, is central to much political action, and language is one of the main tools for the achievement of this general goal. Semino (2008: 85)

Contrary to certain opinions, it should be stressed that, even so-called democratic systems being, as they are, predicated on hierarchical structures, are unlikely to be characterised by equality. Hence, the relationship between those in power (the ruling élite) and those on the receiving end of this power (the ruled) is marked by a social distance which may be measured by a number of asymmetries. It should be noted that manipulation, particularly by powerful agents, is obviously immoral and should not have any legitimacy in societies which define themselves as democratic (van Dijk 2006: 363-364).

With regard to particular political actions, these are mostly achieved through language designed to give an appearance of legitimacy. Chilton (2004: 46) maintains that well-chosen linguistic expressions perform a 'strategic function'. One such strategy is 'representation and misrepresentation':

> *Representation* and *misrepresentation*. Political control involves the control of information, which is by definition a matter of discourse control. It may be quantitative or qualitative. Secrecy is the strategy of preventing people receiving information; it is the inverse

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> of censorship, which is preventing people giving information. In another mode of representation/ misrepresentation, information may be given, but be quantitatively inadequate to the needs or interests of hearers ('being economical with the truth', as British politicians put it). Qualitative misrepresentation is simply lying, in its most extreme manifestation, but includes various kinds of omissions, verbal evasion and denial. Euphemism has the cognitive effect of conceptually 'blurring' or 'defocusing' unwanted referents, be they objects or actions. Implicit meanings of various types also constitute a means of diverting attention from troublesome referents.

This is congruent with the view that people who wield power are frequently seduced by it as has been famously remarked by Lord Acton: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men" (1887)[6]. Many people in power, in virtually Machiavellian ways, use their authority for coercion, protection or promotion of their interests, as has been noted by Castells:

> Power is the relational capacity that enables a social actor to influence asymmetrically the decisions of other social actor(s) in ways that favour the empowered actor's will, interests, and values. Power is exercised by means of coercion (or the possibility of it) and/or by the construction of meaning on the basis of the discourses through which social actors guide their action. Power relationships are framed by domination, which is the power that is embedded in the institutions of society. The relational capacity of power is conditioned, but not determined, by the structural capacity of domination. Institutions may engage in power relationships that rely on the domination they exercise over their subjects. (Castells 2013: 10)

[6] John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, (1834–1902); from his letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/absolute-power-corrupts-absolutely.html (accessed: January 28, 2014).

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The language of politics and journalism may be seen as the language of veiled coercion, particularly when a specific audience is being targeted for particular effects. Thus, it may be posited that those who control media narratives control those who devoutly accept their guidance. Chilton expanding on the power of language (2004: 45-6) states:

> Political actors often act coercively through language in setting agendas, selecting topics in conversation, positioning the self and others in specific relationships, making assumptions about realities that hearers are obliged to at least temporarily accept in order to process the text or talk. Power can also be exercised through controlling others' use of language – that is, through various kinds and degrees of censorship and access control. The latter include the structure and control of public media, the arena in which much political communication takes place.

And language referring to politically and ideologically sensitive issues when used by those who are in a position to control and manipulate people's perceptions is a tool that can mould people's reactions and tailor them to the benefit of those who employ it. The language of control may make use of:

- hyperboles for ironic effect
- euphemisms to appear more emotionally detached but also to avoid condemnation (calling, for example, incidental deaths resulting from military operations: *collateral damage*)
- gross generalisations: *all/everything/everyone*, etc.
- emotionally charged collocations (*cycle of violence, axis of evil*)
- fuzzy concepts (*our way of life, our values, liberty*, etc.)
- 'attacks' on abstract concepts (*ideology, terror*)
- legitimisation and delegitimisation, thus achieving strong association (in-group solidarity) as well as ardent disassociation (condemnation of the out-group) (Dixon and Ulland 2016).

Among the phrases that have been coined to describe the activities of particular American politicians, Chomsky (2007) enumerates: *illegal but legitimate, anticipatory self-defense, unilateral use of military power, uninhibited access to key markets, energy supplies,* and *strategic resources*. All these phrases legitimise what would seem illegitimate or illegal.

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Chilton (2004: 46-7) provides a strong criticism of the strategy of legitimisation and delegitimisation seeing it as one strategy of misrepresentation:

> Strategies of *delegitimisation* (of the other) and *legitimisation* (of the self) may perhaps be conceptualised as lying at the opposite ends of a scale. These end points may coincide with positive face (being and insider and legitimate) and negative face (being not only an outsider and thus not legitimate but also under attack). Delegitimisation can manifest itself in acts of negative other-presentation, acts of blaming, scape-goating, marginalising, attacking the moral character of some individual or group, attacking the communicative cooperation of the other, attacking the rationality and sanity of the other. The extreme is to deny the humanness of the other. At the other end of the spectrum legitimisation, usually oriented to the self, includes self-presentation, manifesting itself in acts of self-praise, self-apology, self-explanation, self-justification, self-identification as a source of authority, reason, vision and sanity, where the self is either an individual or the group with which an individual identifies or wishes to identify.

A similar view may be found in Schneider (2016: 86).

The term *radicalisation* appears in numerous comments, reports and articles published or broadcast by all types of media. It is a fashionable word, though ideologically it is unpopular particularly since, in recent years, it has come to be associated with radical Islam. Radicalisation has come to mean more than "a process by which an individual, or group comes to adopt increasingly extreme political, social, or religious ideals and aspirations that reject or undermine the status quo or undermine contemporary ideas and expressions of freedom of choice"[7]; it is now mostly used in the context of extremism – the kind of terrorism that characterises Muslim fundamentalists. But notwithstanding, the radicalisation of populations is an ongoing process inclusive of Western countries. It may be seen in the rise of ultra-right-wing politics and nationalism in a number of countries and attitudes towards refugees, as well as in the fact that many people in the UK opted for Brexit.

[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Radicalization (accessed: June 25, 2016)

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To conclude, I should like to suggest, that although my study of the linguistic behaviours of Western political actors is still ongoing, I can nevertheless assert that there is much evidence of radicalisation taking place throughout Europe, not to say the world. In my view, many reactionary ideas, having received strong reinforcement from populist journalists, radicalise their often unwittingly obedient audiences. There are many factors responsible for this level of gullibility, not least the exploitation of people's insecurities and their conditioned inability to distinguish between the morally right (legitimate) and the morally wrong (illegitimate). This type of radicalisation has the decidedly traditional but unfriendly face of bias, of bigotry coupled with ardent nationalism. It is practised by authorities who, clinging to culturally and linguistically embedded biases while skilfully using language, more often than not encourage people to accept their lead and ideology. A particularly pertinent point is made by Julian Baginni: "radicalisation is not brainwashing"[8]. Baginni, works on the assumption that in order to be radicalised the audience has to be free of their own biases. Using, the analogy of *the blind leading the blind*, it may be concluded that Europe's becoming increasingly right-wing is a result of *the willing being led by the strong-willed*.

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