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New and different perspectives
on Language and/in Politics

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This issue contains contributions about, and from, different parts of the world: Iraq, Belgium, the United Kingdom (England), Nigeria, and Germany. In this way, we are able to explore and compare similarities and differences in the patterns of language use by politicians and the media, patterns of reception, different functions of genres, and — possibly — a new range of rhetorical manifestations. It is truly timely and important to study more than just the 'Western' voices — as demanded for example by Blommaert (2005). Indeed, Chilton and Wodak (2007: XXX) view the extension of (critical) discourse studies to other parts of the world as one of the major challenges to, and agenda for, current research:

> "While most CDA work in the first couple of decades was mainly in English, one of the earliest regions to develop critical approaches to language and discourse was the Hispanic world and France. … At the present time it is possible to see the emergence of critical discourse studies in other regions, regions that western scholars should never overlook. The Middle East is an especially sensitive area where, nonetheless, dedicated critical discourse analysts pursue their scholarship. In parts of Africa, equally, there are scholars who wish to engage in the ideas and research methods of CDA and who publish their work in the European journals."

Fetzer and Johanssen examine the context-dependent nature of acts of confiding in political interviews and identify its genre-specific constraints and requirements, while investigating British and French political interviews. The communicative act of confiding is compared and contrasted with disclosure, self-disclosure and revelation, and the necessary and sufficient conditions required for confiding in a felicitous manner are examined. Of course, the main interest is to detect which explicit and latent functions such speech acts might have. Particular attention is also given to the genre's status as mediated and public discourse with public and political information.

Shenhav's article argues that notwithstanding politicians' desire to conceal from the public parts of the content of their indoor discussions, one can nevertheless

find 'traces' of their closed door debates (backstage) in their public addresses. The article suggests that these traces seem to be an inevitable part of the process of constructing politics/political discourse. Through a comparative analysis of in-camera and public political discourse in Israel, the author detects techniques for identifying unintentional disclosure of information. These techniques are then applied to specific cases drawn from Israeli politics in which politicians have sought to conceal information in public and semi-public forums. Such scrutiny helps deconstructing the hidden voices in political discourse, thus understanding the strategies which serve creating borders between confidential and public political discourse.

The following paper examines specific aspects of the ongoing 'war in Iraq' (Chouliaraki 2007; Hodge and Nilep 2007): Burridge's paper draws upon insights from rhetorical and discursive psychology in order to attend to the relevance of Anti-American discourses in the public debate in Britain surrounding the invasion of Iraq in March 2003. It is particularly concerned with the difficulty that circulation of such an accusation fostered for critics of the war. Burridge draws on examples from British national press coverage, and the content of parliamentary debates, and identifies three techniques in the main responses made by critics of the war to the possibility that their arguments could be undermined if described as anti-American. Such accusations were often used to delegitimize criticism; on the other hand, some critics generalized in illegitimate ways from accusations against American governmental policies to 'the American people as such'. Hence, the deconstruction of such rhetoric in detail is very important.

Opeibi examines how Nigerian politicians demonstrate their bilingual creativity in an innovative manner, employing linguistic facilities to publicise and sell their political programmes, especially in the use of media multilingualism. She is convinced that this latter use can be defined as a novel persuasive strategy that has come to characterise political campaign texts in Nigeria: political candidates exploit the resources of both the exogenous (English) and indigenous languages (and sometimes along with pidgin) in the same campaign texts in order to woo voters. The paper discusses the functional implications of such new persuasive strategies in multilingual environments.

The paper by Hansen-Thomas focuses on the role of ideology in the development of citizenship policies related to language and naturalization in Germany. Thus, this contribution relates well to on-going debates across Europe and the European Union (see Delanty, Wodak and Jones, in press; Jones and Krzyżanowski, in press; De Cillia and Wodak 2006). More specifically, the paper traces the roots of prevailing language ideologies in Germany and illustrates how these ideologies affect both policies, such as the 2000 Immigration Reform Act and its imposition of new language tests, and certain issues of identity related to nationhood and

citizenship. Finally, the theoretically oriented paper by Carpentier and de Cleen discusses the impact and possible application of Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory, in comparison and in contrast to Critical Discourse Analysis. The author argues convincingly through a case study on media and audience participation that CDA and DTA could be combined well (see also Bärenreuter 2007; Montessori 2007; Howarth et al. 2000). This could take Discourse Studies into new and exciting directions.

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