



A Comparative Case Study of the Construal of the Persona of 3 who are 'the worst of the worst'

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of three prisoners held at Guantanamo in the online editions of four newspapers; The Washington Post, The New York Times, The Guardian and The Independent. It does this: by examining the verbal processes and the Participant Roles in which the three detainees were represented in the four titles over a four year period; by explicating the attributed voices used in each title's reported discourse; and by contrasting the construals of the three detainees in reported clauses with the construals of the detainees in a small human rights corpus from the same period. The study found that despite the newspapers' overt claims to be opposed to the extra-judicial imprisonment of terrorist suspects at Guantanamo the representations of the three detainees suggested that the two American titles positioned themselves vis-a-vis the three prisoners ideologically as implicit promoters of a 'national security' discourse while the British papers managed to ideologically position themselves at times as supportive of the national security argument and at other times as supportive of the human rights discourse.

Key words: Critical Discourse Analysis, Systemic Functional Grammar, Printed media, Bias

1. Background

This paper examines the representations of 3 individuals, imprisoned at the time of writing at Guantanamo, in 4 newspapers. Wodak (2001) proposes that in order to fully understand a discourse and why a media text is a site of contestation, the text and the discourse it is part of must first be placed in its historical context. Otherwise, it will be impossible to attempt to describe the motivations of the text producers. Accordingly, the paper briefly sketches the history of the military prison at Guantanamo, summarises how the three prisoners under discussion came to be imprisoned before examining how the 4 newspapers represented their detentions.

Following the invasion of Afghanistan – itself a response to the Sept 11th attacks – the United States captured numerous suspected Al Qaeda and Taliban soldiers and sympathizers many of whom were initially held at an airbase near Kandahar. In line with President Bush's decree of Feb 7 2002 that the imprisoned suspects were not entitled to the protections of the Geneva Conventions it was decided to transfer some prisoners to the American naval facility at Guantanamo Bay Cuba. As Guantanamo is on land

leased controversially from Cuba, the White House argued that prisoners held there existed outside of US jurisdiction and hence the terms of their imprisonment were not subject to judicial review, (Sands: 2008).

The first prisoners arrived at Guantanamo Bay on January 11 2002 – at a time when the US administration was in the process of denying the applicability of the Geneva Conventions. Since then around 770 individuals have been imprisoned at the controversial Guantanamo military prison. The majority of those prisoners have been released without charge. In January 2009, 255 prisoners remained of which over one hundred had been cleared for and were awaiting release. Those remaining at the time of writing are either being tried or due to be tried by Military Tribunals established by the Military Commissions Act (MCA) signed into law by President Bush on October 17, 2006, Worthington (2007). A New York Times editorial noting that the MCA allowed at the tribunals' discretion the introduction of coercive secret evidence and removed the possibility of legal challenge in the US Federal Court System, labelled the MCA, 'a tyrannical law that will be ranked with the low points in American democracy', (New York Times: 2006). A recent US Supreme Court decision has re-established the authority of Federal civilian oversight of the process.

Since its inception the Guantanamo prison has been heavily criticised by Human Rights NGOs. Additionally in 2002/3 the FBI and the NCIS instructed their employees not to take part in interrogations at Guantanamo because of concerns over the legality of the interrogation techniques used (Sands 2008: Chps 14 & 15) In 2005, the prison was rocked by a series of hunger strikes which were broken through the use of forced feeding – a practice numerous NGOs and medical organisations condemned as torture. (Stafford Smith 2007: 208-215).

The original prisoners upon their arrival were described by the commander of the camp, Brigadier-General Mike Lehnert, as representing, 'the worst elements of al-Qaeda and the Taliban', and on a visit to Guantanamo on January 27 2002, by the then Secretary for Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, as, 'among the most dangerous, best-trained, vicious killers on the face of the earth', Worthington (2007: 127). As the 3 prisoners, whose representations will be examined here, are at the time of writing still detained at Guantanamo it seems safe to assume that in the US administration's view they represent some of the most evil and dangerous people alive.

The three individuals examined here are Binyam Mohamed al Habashi; Saifullah Paracha and Omar Khadr. They were chosen not because they represent a cross section of the Guantanamo detainees but because they don't! It was hoped that the atypicality of their cases would lead to more extensive press coverage and indeed they received more attention than the average, faceless Guantanamo detainee whose stories have not appeared in the mainstream Western press. Moreover, the three prisoners are newsworthy because all have strong connections with Western countries. Binyam, a self-described Londoner, has a legal right to reside in the UK. Paracha lived for an extended period of time in the New York area and has an American Green Card. Khadr was born in Canada and is a Canadian citizen. Furthermore, each of their stories has a unique angle. Binyam claims that he was rendered by the CIA to and horrifically tortured in Morocco before admitting to his involvement in the "dirty bomb plot"- a widely heralded plot though one in

which charges were ultimately dropped against the chief suspect; Jose Padilla. Binyam, himself, however, is currently facing charges and potentially the death penalty for the very same dirty bomb plot! Paracha, a highly successful businessman with a Jewish business partner, disappeared in transit at Bangkok airport during a scheduled business trip from Pakistan to the USA and was initially accused of attempting to use his business to smuggle weapons including nuclear ones into America. Khadr who was severely wounded in a firefight in Afghanistan in which an American soldier was killed, was only 15 at the time of his capture. He is currently charged with the murder of the American soldier, Sgt Christopher Speer.

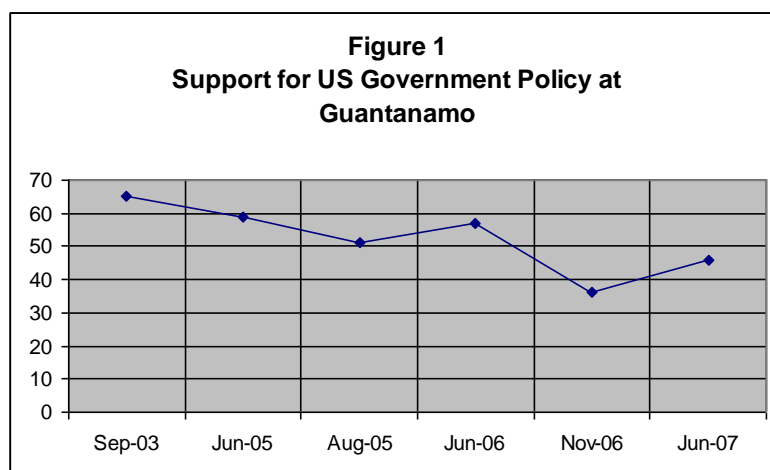
From its inception Guantanamo was controversial outside the United States but within the United States which was still seeking vengeance for the September 11th attacks much less so. Prior to examining the small newspaper corpus which represented the three detainees to their reading publics, it is useful to examine what it is known about the unfolding public attitudes to the treatment of prisoners in Guantanamo because each newspaper article written on Guantanamo functioned in a dialectal relationship with public opinion – starting from an assumed projection of its readership's assumptions and knowledge about Guantanamo and updating these assumptions and knowledge.

While some scholars such as Seaton (1988) claim that the mass media has the potential to set political agendas and re-order political impressions, newspaper readership surveys such as Mori (2005) indicate that readers tend to select newspapers which re-enforce their existing political opinions and attitudes. Accordingly, we can see that individual newspaper titles are constrained by the existing views of their readerships as they actively attempt to re-enforce and modify these views. However, while we can critically examine any text produced by the newspaper titles, we cannot unless we wish to subscribe to the naïve view that text determines reader attitudes know how individual readers read the texts under examination. Fairclough (1992 135-36) reminds us that readers are free to interpret text in a resistant or compliant manner.

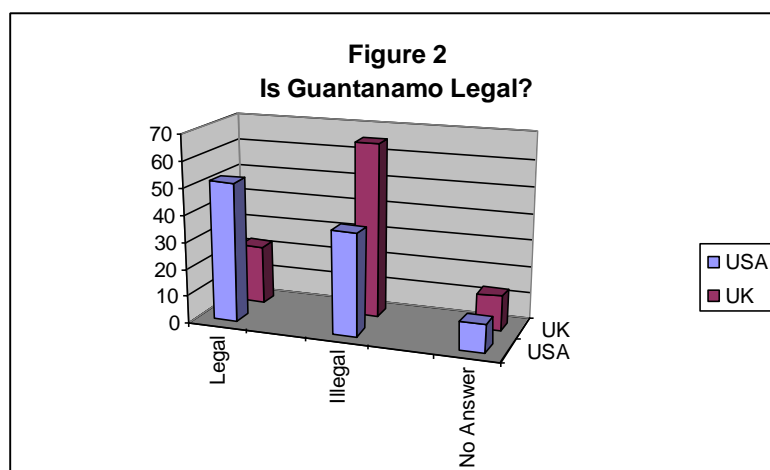
Nor of course can we turn back the clock and read the texts with background knowledge approximating that held by a reader. Van Dijk (2005: 75ff) introduces the concept of 'the K-device' and reminds us that readers with different levels of relevant knowledge – personal, interpersonal, group, institutional, national and cultural – may interpret the same text in a different manner. O'Halloran (2003: 163) warns that as analysts approach texts with motivations and interests remote from those of ordinary readers there is a danger that analysts will over interpret a text. In other words, by focusing on the potential meaning of a text the analyst may miss the actual meaning that a reader who approaches the text non-critically may have gleaned. Instead all that can be claimed for the texts under critical examination is that they created a representation of three individuals and that their readers used these texts as cues to update their individual knowledge. This paper focuses solely on the construals projected by the texts and makes no claims as to how a reader might have interpreted them.

In order to understand readers' attitudes we must therefore turn to other – albeit indirect and weaker – sources of data such as opinion polls. Figure 1 illustrates the favourability ratings of the American public towards the

American policy of holding prisoners outside normal legal channels at Guantanamo. The polls dating from September 2003 to 2007 provide a snapshot of the unfolding changes in American public opinion.¹ While there has been a decline in support for the operation of Guantanamo within the United States the most recent poll shows that almost 50% of respondents support the continued operation of the military prison. It is perhaps significant that the poll which gleaned the lowest support for Guantanamo asked the most marked question by specifically focusing on the legality of the Military Commissions Act (2006).



There is less data available comparing American and British attitudes towards the treatment of prisoners at Guantanamo. Figure 2 summarises the available data.² It should be noted that while far more British respondents regarded the prison at Guantanamo as illegal in June 2006 that we do not conclusively know whether or not they approved of it. However, it does appear that the two British newspaper titles which were examined published in an environment where public opinion presupposed that the practices at Guantanamo were not legal.



2. The Corpus

The research examined the online editions of four newspapers: *The New York Times*; *The Washington Post*; *The Guardian* and *The Independent*. The titles were chosen because all four are serious broadsheet newspapers which claimed to be opposed to the US administration policy of holding prisoners outside the protections afforded by the Geneva Conventions. The online versions were chosen over the print titles for a number of reasons namely: online newspapers unlike the print versions have more of a global presence;³ all four titles' online versions reproduce the vast majority of the print content on the web; and it is logistically easier to search and cut and paste from electronic text than it is from printed text. The online archives of all four titles were searched using as key words the full names – and variants of – Binyam Mohamed al Habashi; Saifullah Paracha and Omar Khadr. This resulted in the corpus of 52 articles set out in Table 1.

Table 1: Newspaper Corpus

Number of Articles →	Guardian	Independent	New York Times	Washington Post
Total	14	13	16	9
Binyam Mohammed	7	9	0	0
Saifullah Paracha	0	0	6	4
Omar Khadr	7	4	10	5

The articles⁴ dated from September 14 2002 to April 15 2008, which was the last date that data was collected. As can be seen from Table 1 the press treatment of the 3 prisoners proved to be surprisingly local with only the British based titles covering the story of Binyam and only the American ones reporting the case of Saifullah Paracha. Thus, it was not possible to directly compare and contrast the press treatment of the three prisoners. However, it was possible to examine how each title construed the public character of the two detainees the individual title reported on.

3. Research Focus

The research investigated whether the discourse of government or of human rights was most prevalent in the 4 newspaper titles' construal of the three prisoners. This was done by:

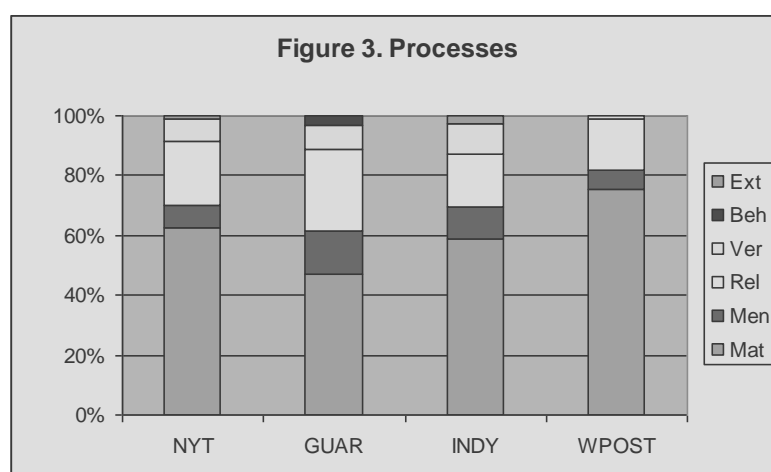
- analysing each clause in which the three prisoners fulfilled a participant role
- examining which voices were overtly and covertly selected for inclusion within the text
- contrasting at clause level the verbal group processes and Participant Roles in the newspaper corpus with a small corpus, covering the same

time period, compiled from the websites of *Amnesty International*; *Human Rights First*; and *Human Rights Watch*.

4. Method

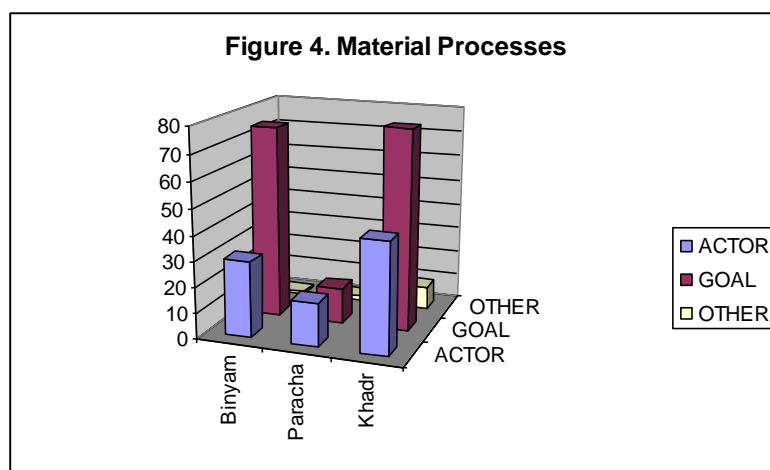
The corpus was read through and all clauses where the three prisoners fulfilled a Participant Role were extracted. This methodology was chosen because it produces concrete numerical data which to some extent mitigates the criticism of scholars such as Widdowson (2000: 10) who argues that analysts working in CDA from an SFL perspective produce results which confirm their own subjective reading of the texts they (partially) examine. In line with Bartlett (2004: 72) it was felt that the, 'concretization of the essential elements of a far more complex process ... can be viewed in the same way as sports statistics in that they should resonate with a spectator's impressions of a game, losing the detail that makes an event more than mere numbers but offering as compensations insights not available as the process unfolds, including one or two genuine surprises.' Hasan (1996) argues that differences in how things are said reflect differences in how things are meant: hence differing construals of the three prisoners offer some insight in the ideologies motivating the world view propagated by the individual newspaper titles.

The reading of the 52 articles produced a corpus of 456 clauses in total with 202 featuring Binyam, 193 Khadr and only 61 featuring Paracha. In order to allow for the explication of the Transitivity system which construes the world of experience into a small set of Process Types the typology laid out in Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) was adopted and 6 process types were recognised namely: Material, Mental, Relational, Verbal, Behavioural, and Existential. Figure 3 shows that the corpus primarily construed the three prisoners as participants in Material processes.

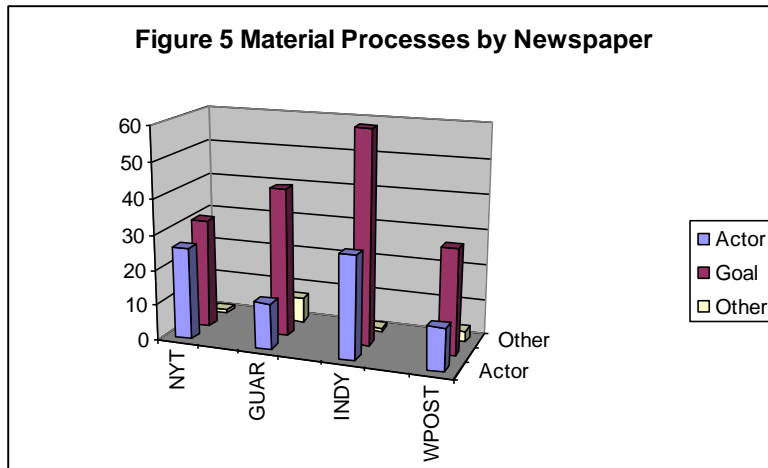


The titles mainly represented the three prisoners as participants in material processes; in other words they are situated in clauses where participants do actions or input energy which results in a quantum of change in the flow of events (Ibid: 179). The prisoners are construed primarily as either the source or the goal of the inputted energy. They are individuals who do actions or

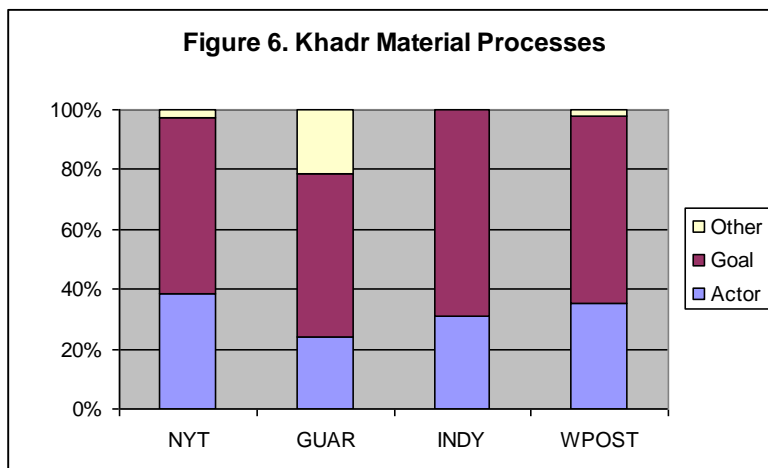
have actions done to them rather than individuals who are sayers, thinkers, perceivers, possessors etc. Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 512ff.) claim that the grammar of English construes the experience of change within the clause in terms of a *process configuration*: the process itself, phenomena construed as participants of the process and other optional phenomena which are associated circumstantially with the process. Within the clause if the process is transitive there are usually two Participant Roles: the Actor and the Goal. The Actor is the Participant who does the deed while the Goal is the participant to whom the process extends or who is impacted upon in some way, (Halliday and Matthiessen (2004: 180).



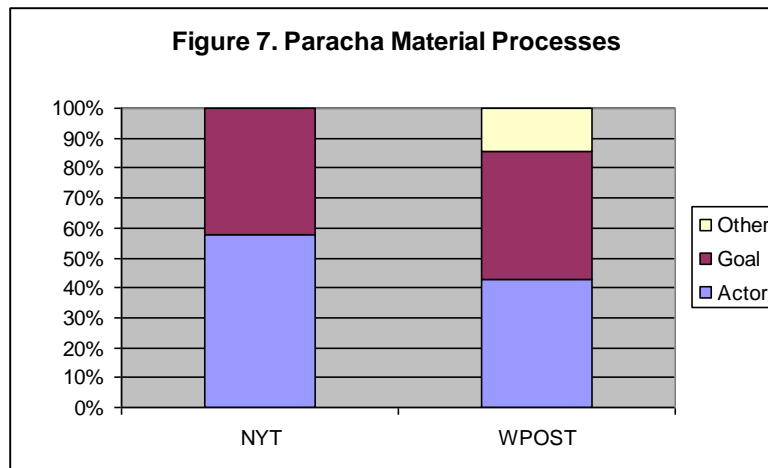
The processes in all the material process clauses were examined in order to see if the participants were construed primarily as Actors or Goals by each newspaper. Figure 4 illustrates that only Saifullah Paracha was construed more frequently as the Actor of a process rather than as the Goal. Indeed the difference between the construals is at first sight staggering. Both Binyam and Khadr were overwhelmingly construed as the Goal of a process while Paracha was narrowly construed most frequently as an Actor. The difference in the construals, as Figure 5 illustrates, are neither the results of individual or national newspaper style. All the titles construed the two prisoners, they reported on, as Goals more frequently than Actors, though the UK titles more clearly construed the prisoners as the Goal of a process rather than as the actor who initiated it.



The four newspaper titles all, as mentioned above, reported on the case of Omar Khadr. Figure 6 shows that all of the titles represented Khadr more frequently as a Goal rather than an actor providing further evidence that the difference in the construal of Saifulah Paracha cannot be accounted for solely on stylistic grounds.



Therefore it appears that the case of Saifullah Paracha was construed differently than the other two cases.



In order to explicate the reason for the difference in the construal of Paracha and the other two prisoners, the clauses in which Paracha participated were analysed and contrasted with the process types which the other prisoners participated in. Table 2 presents the process types for each prisoner as Actor broken down into the more delicate categories found in Roget's Thesaurus.

Table 2 Process types for each prisoner as Actor

PR = Actor	Paracha	Binyam	Khadr
Abstract/Causation			
	Make	Make	Make
Space/General			
	Attend	Live (3) Lose	Plant (2) Live
Space/Dimensions			Wear
Space/Motion			
	Met (5) Return (2) Board Travel Export Ship	Go (3) Come (3) Arrive (2) Travel Get to	Enter Pop up Throw (7) Throw up Emerge Fire Appear (2) Urinate
Matter/Organic			
	Raise	was Born (3)	Kill (10) Injure Wound
Modes of Communication			
	Deny		
Volition/Voluntary			
	Work		Conduct (2)
Volition/Antagonism			
			Fight (3)
Volition/Result			
	Kick	Beat	
Volition prospective			
		Deteriorate Smear Spread	Decline Regain
Social Volition			
	Participate	Lobby	
Social Volition/Possessive			
	Provide Smuggle	Spend	Spend (2) Receive Provide
Emotion/Morality			
	Sue		

The numbers in brackets indicate the amount of instances.

Even though Paracha occupies the Participant Role of Actor more frequently than the other two prisoners; he is an Actor in processes which semiologically represent low volition. Accordingly, little if any of his individuality is construed; only the three Social Volition processes *participate*; *provide* and *smuggle* and the Emotion/Morality process *sue* represent him as a person with a mind of his own. He is construed as a proto-typical businessperson one who *meets*; *boards*; *travels*; *exports and ships*. A similar picture emerges in how the other two prisoners were construed; they too are largely Actors in processes with low volition.

Of the three detainees Khadr is the only one who is clearly construed as an existential threat that prime facie might justify his imprisonment in Guantanamo. He is represented as Actor who *kills* and *fights*. Binyam, conversely, is construed as an Actor in processes which do not seem to justify his imprisonment. Paracha is construed as a marginal Actor in putative terrorist plots: one who *participates* and *smuggles* however, neither his participation nor his smuggling had been realised. This raises the possibility that the three prisoners were construed differently vis-à-vis their involvement in illegal acts. However, in order for a fuller picture to emerge it is necessary to examine process types where the prisoners were construed as Goals of the processes, i.e. in roles where they were impacted by the process. Table 3 presents the process types for each prisoner in the Participant role of Goal

Paracha and Binyam are construed as Goals of very different process types. Paracha as a participant is primarily impacted by *Social Volition* Process types; he is a person who is *arrested*; *taken*; *held (3)*; *picked up*; *rendered* and *accused(3)*. Binyam, conversely, is construed as person who is equally impacted upon by both *Social Volition* Process Types and by *Space* Process Types; he is a person who is not only *captured*; *taken(9)*; *arrested (3)* *jailed*; *held*; *rendered*; *kept*; *accused*; *interrogated (3)*; *questioned (2)* etc but also *punched*; *hit*; *kicked*; *beaten*; *shackled*; *handcuffed*; *hung (3)*; *cut (4)* etc.. Of significance he is construed as a person who has been impacted by the process of *torture* on ten instances. Khadr is construed more similarly to Paracha than he is to Binyam as one who is impacted upon by processes such as *capture (9)*; *accuse (12)*; *arrest (2)*; *charge (6)*; *take (2)*; *detain*; *keep*; and *hold*. Though unlike the other two he is also construed as a person who was *designated*; *classified*; *labelled*; *identified* and *placed* indicating that the newspapers felt a need in Khadr's case to explain why they construe him as a person under legal sanction rather than as a victim of an unfair and arbitrary system.

We can see that the three prisoners were construed in different ways: Paracha as a participant in a legal or quasi-legal process; Binyam as both participant in a legal/quasi-legal process and as a victim of the process; Khadr as a participant in a legal/quasi-legal process which because of the presence of processes of *Intellect/Communication of Ideas* is construed as a reasoned and deliberative one. Thus, we can see that the titles' construals reproduce contrasting ideological views of the operation of the Guantanamo Prison. In the case of Khadr it is represented as a reasoned and deliberative process which is implicitly supported; in the case of Paracha as a process which while not condemned is also not overtly criticised. The construal of Binyam conversely signals ideological opposition to his treatment and implicit criticism of Guantanamo.

Table 3 Process types for each prisoner as Goal

PR = Goal	Paracha	Binyam	Khadr
Abstract/Quantity		Shackle Handcuff Cut (4) ¹ Link	Shackle
Abstract/Causation	Control Make		
Abstract/Change			Find
Space/Dimensions		Strip Hang (3) Take off	
Space/Motion	Transfer (2) Move (2) Bring (2)	Punch Hit Kick Pull up Beat (2) Come Turn over to Hand over to Send (3) Fly Arrive	Transfer Shoot (4)
Matter/General		Weigh	
Matter/Inorganic			Pour
Intellect/Precursory Conditions and Operations	Interview	Interview Question (2) Interrogate (2)	Interrogate (3)
Intellect/Results of Reasoning		Try	Try (2)
Intellect/Communication of Ideas			Designate Classify Label Identify Place
Volition Voluntary	Perform	Leave	
Volition prospective			Treat Use Wound (3)
	Social Volition		
	Arrest Take Hold (2) Pick up Detain	Capture Jail Take (9) Arrest (3) Keep Hold Grant Force Allow Be Jailed	Capture (9) Hold (2) Detain Intern Arrest (2) Take (3) Keep Release
Social Volition/Possessive	Render	Render (2) Get Give	Give
Emotion/Morality	Accuse (3)	Accuse Torture (10) Charge Abuse Threaten	Arraign Accuse (12) Charge (6) Abuse File (3) Threaten

¹ Includes two instances of an incongruent process *take a scalpel to*.

It is clear that if we combine the representations of the 3 prisoners we can see that the combined representation of the four newspapers is implicitly supportive of Khadr's treatment, more neutral of Paracha's treatment and opposed to Binyam's imprisonment. It is of interest that Binyam's story was represented only in the UK titles and this raises the issue whether their opposition towards Binyam's treatment was specific to his case or reflective of opposition towards the operation of Guantanamo in general. Hence, it was decided to examine the Process Types in which Khadr participated both as Actor and Goal. Table 4 lists the process types.

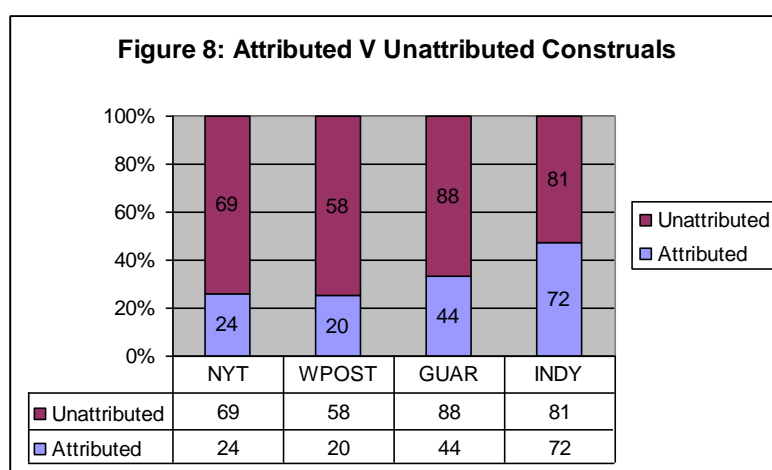
Table 4 Material Process types Khadr by Newspaper as Actor and Goal

PR = Actor	NYT	WPOST	GUAR	INDY
Abstract/Causation				
Space/General		Live	Plant	Make
Space/Dimensions				Wear
Space/Motion	Pop up Throw (3) Urinate	Emerge Throw (4) Fire	Enter Throw (2) Appear	Appear
Matter/Organic	Kill	Kill		Kill
Volition/Antagonism	Fight (2)	Fight (1)		
Volition prospective		Regain		
Social Volition/Possessive	Spend	Receive		
PR = Goal	NYT	WPOST	GUAR	INDY
Abstract/Quantity	Shackle			
Abstract/Change				Find
Space/General			Transfer	
Space/Motion		Shoot	Shoot (3)	
Matter/Inorganic	Pour			
Intellect/Precursory Conditions	Interrogate	Interrogate (2)		
Intellect/Results of Reasoning	Try	Try		
Intellect/Communication of Ideas		Classify Label		Identify Place
Volition prospective	Wound	Treat	Wound (2)	Use
Social Volition	Capture (5) Hold Detain Arrest Intern Allow	Take Detain Release Capture Charge (3) File	Arrest Take (2) File (2) Capture	Capture Keep Arrest
Social Volition/Possessive				Give
Emotion/Morality	Abuse Accuse (5) Charge (2)	Threaten Arraign Accuse (4)	Accuse (2) Charge (2)	Accuse

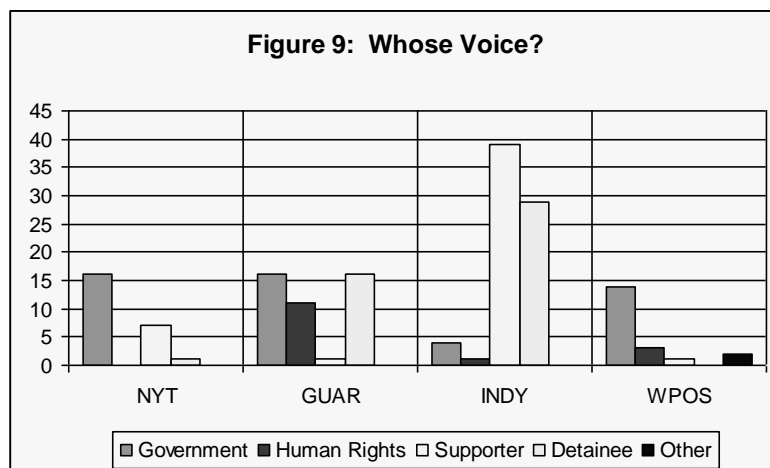
All 4 titles construed Khadr in a similar manner as a person who in the Participant Role of Actor is engaged in acts of violence: he *kills; fights; throws (grenades), plants (bombs)* etc. Furthermore the 4 titles construed Khadr primarily as the Goal of a legal/quasi-legal process. Only the *Washington Post* did not represent Khadr as impacted by the process of *arrest*; instead it represents him as *detained*. Only the two American titles and the *Independent* construe Khadr as being impacted by processes of physical or mental abuse; *abuse; threaten* and *use (as a human mop)*. By construing Khadr as the Goal of *Intellect/Results of Reasoning* and *Intellect/Communication of Ideas* all the newspapers except the *Guardian* add gravity and deliberation to the process he participated in. Thus, to conclude no newspaper title construes Khadr as being anything other than a dangerous actor who is undergoing a legal/quasi-legal process; such a construal is by no means at odds with an ideological view which supports, at least implicitly, the extra judicial incarceration of terrorist suspects.

5. Outside Voices in Reported and Reporting Clauses

As any newspaper text represents a completed struggle between opposing positions and voices it is crucial to investigate whether one side or the other had a more privileged access to the newspapers. In order to investigate whose voice was represented most often in the four newspaper titles the percentage of clauses with one of the three prisoners construed in a Participant Role in a process directly attributed to a source was calculated. The attributed voices were broken down into the following categories: Government, Human Rights, Supporter, Detainee and Other. The Government category included civil and military spokespersons from the US, UK and Canadian governments. Representatives for NGO organisations, such as Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and Human Rights First formed the Human Rights category. The Supporter category included family members of the prisoner, lawyers working directly for the clients including NGOs such as Reprieve. The Detainee category refers only to the voice of the individual prisoner himself while the Other category refers to 'neutral' experts such as doctors and lawyers. Figure 8 presents the proportion of attributed versus unattributed construals of the 3 prisoners.



It is immediately noticeable that the UK titles especially the *Independent* favour a style which includes a significant number of attributed construals. Figure 9 details whose voice had the most resonance within each of the titles.



It is striking that the *Independent* overwhelmingly uses representations supportive of the prisoners whereas the Washington Post almost exclusively reports representations of Government voices. The evidence appears to be that the *Independent* is the newspaper which adopts an ideological stance most sympathetic towards the prisoners while the Washington Post adopted a stance which was the most hostile towards the prisoners with the *New York Times* slightly favouring government representations and the Guardian slightly favouring voices which promote the construal of the prisoners as victims rather than as criminals.

With the exception of the *Independent* the other three titles mostly construed the 3 prisoners as participants in processes which were not attributed to any voice outside of the newspaper, and, thus, it could be legitimately argued that the inclusion of outside voices served simply to balance the newspapers' internal representation of the 3 prisoners. But Fairclough (1995: 58) noted a tendency for newspapers to be ambivalent in maintaining what he labelled 'boundary maintenance'; the extent to which the voices of the newspaper's primary reporting discourse is kept separate from the secondary discourse of reported discourse. Hence it is important to see whether the unattributed processes construed the 3 prisoners as criminals or victims. This was done by comparing the process types for all the unattributed material processes in the newspapers with the construal of the 3 prisoners in the small Human Rights corpus detailed in Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5: Human Rights Corpus Material Process; as Actor

PR = Actor	Paracha	Binyam	Khadr
Abstract/Quantity		Stop	Boycott (2) Lose
Abstract/Change	Maintain Set up		Convert
Space/General	Live (2)		
Space/Dimensions		Wear Dress	
Space/Motion	Come (2)	Move	Walk
	Arrive (2) Travel Fly (2) Reach Move Return Board (4) Deplane (2)	Hold up Take down Prop up	Throw Embark Vomit
Matter/organic			Kill
Intellect/Precursory Conditions and Operations			
Volition prospective	Study Provide	Write	
Social Volition	Refuse	Spend	
Social Volition/Possessive			Participate in

Table 6: Human Rights Corpus Material Process as Goal

PR = Goal	Paracha	Binyam	Khadr
Abstract/Quantity		Link	Shackle Short-shackle
Abstract/Causation	Control		
Abstract/Change			Find
Space/General			Leave (2)
Space/Dimensions	Hood		Press
Space/Motion	Transfer (4) Move Throw Bring	Escort	Transfer (4) Throw Shoot Kick Lift up (2) Drop Urinate Visit
Matter/Inorganic			Pour
Intellect/Precursory Conditions and Operations			Interrogate (2)
Intellect/Results of Reasoning	Consider		Try
Intellect/Communication of Ideas			Classify Place (2)

Modes of communication	Ring	
Volition Voluntary	Perform	
Volition prospective		Treat Use Wound Force (2) Destroy
Volition/Antagonism	Blindfold	
Social Volition	Arrest (2) Take (4) Detain Hold(2) Keep (2) Seize Cuff	Detain (2) Arrest (2) Take (3) Hold (3) Keep Tie Be subject
Special Social Volition		Allow
Social Volition/Possessive		Give Provide
Emotion/Morality	Accuse (3)	Accuse (2) Charge (2) Threaten Torture Punish Frighten Rape

Table 7 details the process types in the newspapers where the 3 prisoners participated as Actors in clauses, which were not overtly ascribed to an external source.

Table 7: Process types for each prisoner in unattributed clauses – in the newspapers; as Actor and Goal

PR = Actor	Paracha	Binyam	Khadr
Abstract/Causation		Make	Make
Space/General	Attend	Live (3)	Plant (2)
Space/Dimensions			Wear
Space/Motion	Met (4) Return Board Travel Export Deplane (2)	Go (3) Come (3) Arrive (2) Travel Get to	Enter Pop up Throw (3) Appear (2) Emerge
Matter/Organic	Raise	Born (3)	Kill (2)
Volition/Antagonism			Fight (1)
Volition/Result		Beat	
Volition prospective			Decline Regain
Social Volition	Participate	Lobby	
Social Volition/Possessive	Provide Smuggle		Spend Receive
Emotion/Morality	Sue		

	Paracha	Binyam	Khadr
PR = Goal			
Abstract/Quantity		Shackle Handcuff	
Abstract/Causation	Control Make		
Abstract/Change			Find
Space/Dimensions		Strip Hang (1)	
Space/Motion			Transfer Shoot (2)
	Bring (1)	Turn over to Come Send (3) Fly	
Intellect/Precursory Conditions and Operations	Interview	Question (1)	Interrogate (2)
Intellect/Results of Reasoning			Try (2)
Intellect/Communication of Ideas			Designate Classify Label Identify Place
Volition Voluntary	Perform	Leave	
Volition prospective			Treat Wound (2)
Social Volition	Hold (1) Pick up	Capture Jail Take (6) Arrest (3) Keep Hold Grant Allow	Capture (7) Hold (1) Release Intern Arrest (2) Take (2) Keep
Social Volition/Possessive	Render	Give Get	Give
Emotion/Morality	Accuse (3)	Accuse Torture (5) Charge	Accuse (12) Charge (6) Arraign File (3)

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In the case of Saifullah Paracha the *New York Times* construed him as Actor predominantly in terms of Space Motion Process Types such as *travel*, *return*, *board* and in relation to his job *export*. Such a construal is similar to that of the Human Rights corpus which construes Paracha as Actor in Space Motion Process types on 16 out of 25 instances. Only one process, printed on 2 occasions, *meet* construes Paracha tangentially as being a possible participant in a suspicious act – familiarity with Osama bin Laden. The *Washington Post* only construed Paracha as Actor in three clauses two of which are *meet* and the other the Social Volition Possessive Process *provide* construes Paracha as an Al-Qaeda helper; a construal which is not present in the Human Rights corpus.

The *New York Times* construes Paracha as the Goal of a single process *hold*. The *Washington Post* construes him in terms of four process types: Space Motion as an object to be *transferred* and *moved*; Intellect Precursory Conditions and Operations as an object to *be interviewed*; Volition Possessive: as a personal possession ownership of which can be transferred to another and Volition Prospective as an object to be *held* and *picked up* – an informal idiomatic selection which appears to routinise the act of Paracha's detention and perhaps legitimate it. While both newspapers' representation of Paracha is similar to that of the Human Rights corpus which mainly construes him in terms of Space Motion and Social Volition; there is one significant difference. The human rights corpus does not routinise the actual moment of his detention and makes it clear that he was *blindfolded, cuffed, hooded* and seized off a commercial aeroplane in a third country (Thailand) by American officials while in transit to the United States. In short, the US by rejecting the opportunity to allow Paracha to fly onto the US where he could have been picked up, performed an extraordinary act which was not fully represented by the two newspapers.

Both the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* construed Khadr as an Actor in processes of violence; he *planted bombs; killed; threw grenades; fought and injured*. Such a construal is noticeably different from the more mixed Human Rights construal of Khadr where he *vomited; embarked; boycotted* and *lost weight* as well as *threw grenades* and *killed*. The *New York Times* construed Khadr narrowly in the participant role Goal e.g. in the Volition Prospective Processes (6) – *arrest; capture* (4) and *intern*; Emotion/Morality processes (9) – *charge* (4) and the weaker *accuse* (5) and once as the Goal of an Intellect/Communication of Ideas process – *designate*. The *Washington Post's* construal is very similar in that Khadr is chiefly represented as the Goal of three process types: Intellect/Communication of Ideas – *determine* and *designate*; Volition/prospective: (not) *release, detain* and *take* (into custody) and Emotion/Morality processes *charge* (3), *accuse* (3) and the legalistic *arraign*. The *Washington Post* on one instance construes Khadr as the Goal of *shoot* but this construal is counterbalanced by the construal of him as the Goal of *treat*. The Human Rights corpus also construes Khadr as a Goal of Social Volition Processes – 13 instances and Emotion/Morality processes – 9 instances. However, while the processes are similar in the Social Volition category there are significant differences in the Emotion/Morality processes. 5 of the 9 processes construe Khadr as the victim – he is the one subjected to or to the possibility of being the Goal of *threat, torture, rape, frighten* and *punish*. The Human Rights corpus construes Khadr as the Goal of a far wider range of semiological processes types; e.g., *shackle, short-shackle, kick, lift up, drop, throw, shoot, wound, force* (2) and *destroy*.

The two newspapers construe both Paracha and Khadr in narrower semiological terms than does the human rights corpus. It seems that neither title relied on the Human Rights construal in construing *reporting* processes which represented the two prisoners to their readerships.

Both UK titles construe Khadr as Actor in a manner similar to the American papers. In the *Guardian* he is construed as an Actor who *plants* (bombs), *throws* (grenades), *kills, wounds* and *conducts* (operations). For the *Independent* he *kills* (2) and *conducts* (operations). Such a representation is

again narrower than the Human Rights corpus described above. Neither paper construes Khadr as Goal in a manner which is markedly different from how the American titles construed him as Goal. The *Guardian* construes him as the Goal of Volition Prospective Process types he is *captured* (3) and *taken* (into custody) and of Emotion/Morality Process types where he is *accused* (3) and *charged* (3). The *Independent* construes him as the Goal of Intellect/Communication of Ideas Process types where he is *placed* and *identified*; Volition Prospective Process types where he is *captured* and *arrested* and as the Emotion/Morality Process type *accused*. The use of the process *arrest* as with the *New York Times's* use of the verb routinises his capture on the battlefield and removes from the foreground how he was captured. The *Guardian*, however, simultaneously construes him as a victim he is the Goal of the processes *shoot* (3) and *wound* (2). Both British titles' construal of Khadr in 'reporting clauses' is narrower than that found within the Human Rights corpus where the idea of Khadr as a victim is foregrounded.

The *Guardian* construed Binyam as an Actor in processes which represented him as a migrant/drifter struggling to overcome a drug habit: he *arrives*, *goes* (2); *lives* and *kicks* (the habit). The *Independent* construes Binyam in almost identical terms. He is an actor who *travels* (2), *comes* (3), *goes* and *beats* (the habit). The remaining two processes represent him as engaged in a dirty protest against his incarceration – he *spreads* his faeces on the walls. Both newspaper's construals while sympathetic to Binyam are distinctly different to that found within the Human Rights corpus which presents Binyam not as a desperate protestor but as rational, witty and polite protestor who *held up* a sign mocking the Military Commissions Act; *propped it up* so that the courtroom observers could see it, and *moved* and *took it down* when requested to do so by the court.

Both newspapers represented Binyam as the Goal of Intellect/Precursory Conditions and Operations Processes – one who was *interrogated* and *questioned*, Social Volition processes – *Guardian*: *arrest* (3), *capture*, *take* (into custody) and *the Independent*: *arrest* (5), *take* (into custody), *keep*, *be jailed*, *held* and *forced*. The *Independent* more than the *Guardian* construed Binyam as the Goal of Emotion/Morality processes: *accuse* and *torture* (3) compared to the *Guardian's* construal of Binyam as the Goal of the process *charge*. The human rights corpus by contrast did not construe Binyam as a Goal except in two processes – *link* and *escort*.

6. Conclusion

This study has located some differences between the newspapers' ideological positionings. The two American titles construed Khadr and Paracha mostly in a manner consistent with their tacit approval of a policy which ranks 'national security' above individual human rights with the *Washington Post* notably construing the manner of Paracha's detention as a routine 'arrest' when it was anything but. The ideological positioning of the British titles proved to be more mixed. In Binyam's case both papers foregrounded his victimhood and by so doing implicitly promoted a human rights agenda. However, in the case of Khadr the British titles adopted a similar construal to the American papers foregrounding him as a threat and backgrounding his victimhood.

There were noticeable differences between the voices which were overtly selected within each title. The *Washington Post* favoured official government voices as did the *New York Times* to a lesser extent; both American papers positioned themselves as implicit supporters of the ‘national security’ argument and as promoters of ‘national security’ compatible discourse. The *Guardian* selected from a wider range of voices and did not privilege the voices of government, human rights or the detainee’s supporters – though overall by a ratio of around 2 to 1 the voices it selected promoted the discourse of Human Rights.

The *Independent* privileged the voice of one detainee (Binyam) and the voices of his supporters especially that of his legal representatives. Conversely the *Washington Post* ideologically positioned itself more closely on the National Security side as did the *New York Times* – though the *New York Times* opened up some spaces for the competing Human Rights discourse. The *Independent* reported only the construals of the Human Rights discourse while the *Guardian’s* coverage was more balanced it also favoured construals from the discourse of Human Rights. However, it must be remembered that neither of the British titles provided space for a reported Human Rights construal of Omar Khadr. The comparison of the Human Rights corpus with the newspaper corpus found that none of the four newspapers in their reporting clauses imported the construals found in the Human Rights corpus; there was little if any covert intertextual migration from the human rights corpus into the newspaper discourse.

In short the scorecard records that the two US titles positioned themselves ideologically as implicit promoters of ‘national security’ discourse while the British papers managed to ideologically position themselves in both camps – human rights for Binyam and national security for Khadr.

A description such as this can go no further than explicating the textual patterning of features which represent instances of the language system used to represent events in the world in a particular way. It can not, however explain the motivations for the ideological biases noted. As such it needs to be supplemented by expert analysis of the tensions existing within the daily operation of each newspaper; the commercial relationships between newspapers and advertisers; the personal networking of journalists and authority figures such as politicians and senior civil servants. But equally work that attempts to explain bias within the print media must first systematically demonstrate the existence of the bias by systematically explicating the covert textual patterning which forms the cryptogrammar which, at least in part, instantiates the newspaper discourse and represents the world through the prism of the title’s bias.

¹ Full information on all of the polls is available at <http://www.angus-reid.com/polls/>

The polls selected are:

The TNS/WashingtonPost/ABC News conducted in Sep 2003 which asked whether the respondent supported or opposed the federal government holding suspected terrorists without trial at the US military prison in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba?

The TNS/Washington Post./ABC News poll conducted from June 2 – 5 2005 which asked the respondent how confident they were that the US is adequately protecting the rights of

prisoners in the US campaign against terrorism, such as those being held in the US military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba?

The Polling Company poll conducted from Aug 10 -12 2006 which asked the respondents whether detaining suspects without charge at Guantanamo is fair or unfair?

The TNS/Washington Post/ABC news poll conducted from June22-25 2006 which asked the same question as Poll (1) above.

The Polling Company poll conducted on Nov 7 2006 which asked the respondents whether they thought the Military Commissions Act of 2006 was fair or unfair?

The Opinion Research Corporation/CNN poll conducted on June22-24 2007 which asked whether the respondents thought that the US should continue to operate the Guantanamo camp?

- 2 This table is based on a poll conducted by the Program on International Policy Attitudes conducted in June/July 2006 in five countries including the USA and Britain. The poll asked respondents whether or not they thought American Practices at Guantanamo were legal.
- 3 For instance by 2008, the online line edition of the NYT attracted at least 146 million visitors (Complete.com survey available at <http://siteanalytics.compete.com/nytimes.com/?metric=uv>). The online edition of the Washington Post was estimated to receive 16 million visits every month. (<http://siteanalytics.compete.com/WashingtonPost.com/?metric=uv>). The Guardian received 15,955,321 visits in December 2007 (http://www.abce.org.uk/ABCE_PDFS/GuardianUnlimited1207w.pdf). I was not able to find circulation figures for the Independent.
- 4 The full list of articles is available from the author upon request.

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