# A Systemic Functional Approach to Analysing and Interpreting Ideology: An Illustration from French Editorials

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ABSTRACT

This article proposes a methodology for the analysis of ideology drawing on systemic functional theory and using as a case study two French editorials. Editorials - which offer an interpretation of key events intended to give an overall direction to the reader's understanding of the world - are a privileged site for the construal of opinion and therefore for the analysis of ideology and evaluative language in journalistic discourse. In this article we undertake an analysis of appraisal resources and transitivity in two editorials from French newspapers of contrasting political orientation, *Le Figaro* and *Libération,* to highlight how they construe ideology through the foregrounding of particular patterns of linguistic choices.

We will show how these patterns interact in the text to convey the ideology of each newspaper and to persuade the reader to adopt its perspective on the event (the kidnaping of two French journalists) and on the action/position that should be taken.

## 1. Ideology as a semiotic system

Ideology has been approached from various perspectives within Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), a social-semiotic theory of language as meaning potential (see for example Threadgold, 1986; Hasan, 1986; Martin, 1985, 1986, 1992; Kress, 1983, 1985) but they all have a common thread which is to view ideology as a semiotic system that is realised in language through social interaction. Van Dijk (1998:319-20) points out that we are only at the beginning of an understanding of the "structures of text that systematically express, convey, signal, communicate or influence underlying ideologies" and he lists the many key questions

yet to be addressed including how ideologies are discursively expressed and reproduced in such important social domains as politics, the media and education.

It is our aim in this article to demonstrate how the linguistic tools offered by systemic functional linguistics may provide such a framework for the analysis of ideology in the news media. We will propose a model for the analysis of ideology in texts derived from Hasan's (1985) model for the analysis of second-order semiosis in verbal art. Hasan's highest level in the semiotic system of verbal art, THEME will be re-interpreted here as the level where ideological meaning is created out of the impact of social and belief systems on linguistic choices. Hasan (1985: 97) writes that "in its nature, the theme of verbal art is very close to a generalisation, which can be viewed as a hypothesis about some aspect of the life of social man". She adds that "one of the reasons that verbal art can never be dissociated from the community in which it is created is precisely because the stratum of theme is closest to a community's ideology" (Hasan 1985: 99). The argument proposed here is that all texts construe some level of ideological meaning, that ideological meaning pervades all strata of the linguistic system and is created through language by all three metafunctions: interpersonal (enactment of social roles), experiential (representation of reality) and textual (construction of text as cohesively related to its context). Following Hasan's approach to the analysis of THEME in verbal art, we interpret ideology as being realised by Symbolic Articulation whereby patterns of linguistic choices are foregrounded. In Halliday's words:

> Foregrounding […] is prominence that is motivated. It is not difficult to find patterns of prominence in a poem or prose text, regularities in the sounds or words or structures that stand out in some way, or may be brought out by careful reading; and one may often be led in this way towards a new insight, through finding that such prominence contributes to the writer's total meaning. But unless it does, it will seem to lack motivation; a feature that is brought into prominence will be 'foregrounded' only if it relates to the meaning of the text as a whole. This relationship is a functional one: if a particular feature of the language contributes, by its prominence, to the total meaning of the work, it does so by virtue of and through the medium of its own value in the language-through the linguistic function from which its meaning is derived. Where that function is relevant to the interpretation of the work, the prominence will appear motivated. (Halliday, 1971: 339)

These foregrounded patterns are realised by means of verbalisation, i.e through the semiotic system of language, as shown in figure 1.

From our viewpoint, this model can be applied to any text, literary or other, that is, in any text, it can be said that the language conveys more than the semantic content realised in the grammar. It conveys some kind of overall message, opinion, voice, view point or ideology in relation to the reality being talked or written about, and encapsulates systems of meaning that reflect the speaker/writer's interpretation and experience of the world and society. In order to identify the ideology we analyse the linguistic resources of the text in relation to their socio-cultural context and identify foregrounded interpersonal, experiential and textual patterns within the overall text. Although for the purpose of this paper we have chosen to focus solely on experiential and interpersonal systems, there is no doubt that the textual systems also contribute to the realisation of ideological meaning.

To illustrate our approach we have selected two editorials from French newspapers written
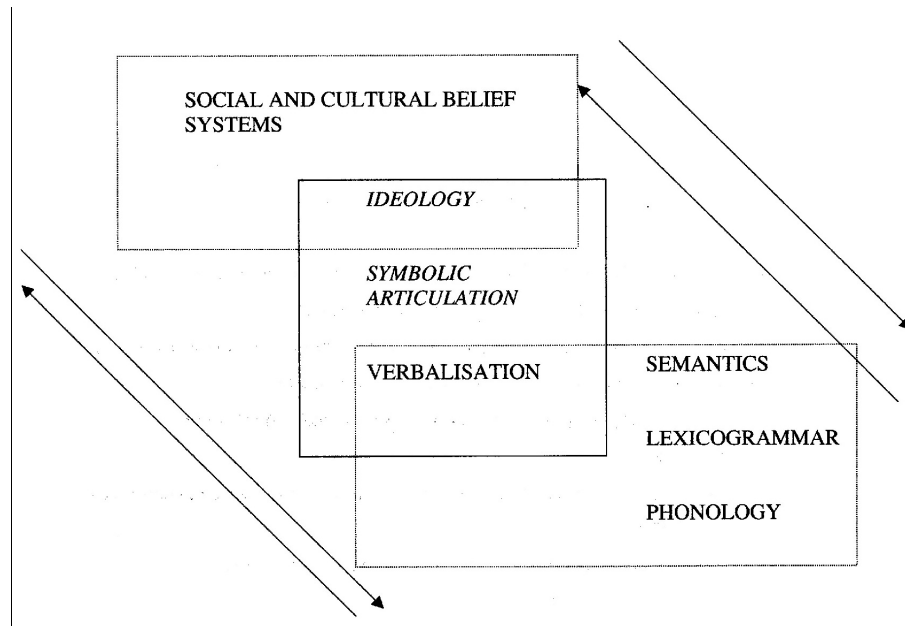
**Figure 1.** A model for analysing and interpreting ideology (adapted from Hasan, 1985).

at the same time, about the same event: the kidnapping of two French journalists in Iraq. This event was chosen because the kidnapping of the two journalists was of such importance and prominence in France that it was certain to be the subject of simultaneous editorials across a broad range of newspapers. "Echo" appeared in *Libération* on August 31st 2004, and "Une méthode face à l'horreur" in *Le Figaro* on September 1st 2004. Both texts are therefore similar in terms of the situational variables of Field (the activity taking place), Tenor (the social relationships) and Mode (the role of language) (See Halliday and Hasan 1985, ch.3 on register variation). The contextual variables of the two editorials analysed can be described as:

*Field*: A representation of a particular world event, here the kidnapping of two French journalists;
*Tenor*: A journalist writing his viewpoint on a particular event for a general French readership;
*Mode*: To persuade the reader to view an event in a particular way and take a position or action; Medium: written; Channel: graphic.

*Le Figaro* is aligned with the ruling UMP (Union for a Popular Movement) party, the main French right political party; its readership is closer to the traditional, conservative, end of the political spectrum. *Libération* occupies a position almost diametrically opposite: in origin countercultural, suspicious of all governments, political parties and institutions, it appeals to a younger, more radical and urban readership. We have chosen to analyse and compare editorials because they offer an interpretation of key events intended to give an overall direction to the reader's understanding of the world, to construct and maintain what van Dijk (1995) calls a "preferred model" of events – they are a privileged site for the construal of opinion and therefore for the analysis of ideology.

Since the general situational categories of Field, Tenor and Mode are held constant in our

two texts, it is of particular theoretical and methodological interest to attempt to work on their ideological differences. Holding constant these aspects of the context of situation and subject matter allows us to better highlight which linguistic features foreground the ideological meanings across the different metafunctions and what methods we need to develop to be able to analyse these and interpret the contrasting ideologies that pervade our texts. We will show how the distinct ideological positions are foregrounded in each text by patterns and interaction of patterns from the grammatical experiential system of transitivity in conjunction with the interpersonal systems of modality and the semantic interpersonal system of appraisal.

## 2. Transitivity: The representation of experience

Within SFL, the transitivity systems consist of two simultaneous systems, PROCESS TYPES and AGENCY that realise two semantic models of participation referred to by Halliday (2004) as the transitive and ergative models. The transitive model construes experience from a particularizing perspective as different domains are realised by the different process types, material, behavioural, mental, verbal and relational. The ergative model construes experience from a generalising perspective where all processes can be viewed as being caused/brought about or not by an external Agent. We will now explore the features that stand out when looking at transitivity choices in our two editorials. First we notice that, unlike 'hard news' stories for instance that tend to foreground doings and happenings, these texts have a majority of relational processes and in particular of the attributive type (See tables 1 and 2 below). This is, we believe, a feature of the editorial genre whose function is not to tell us what happened but rather how things are and should be. Another feature, which is likely to be constitutive of the genre, is that many of the processes are modulated, i.e. modal verbs, mostly of the modulation type expressing obligation, are used to modify the main processes. This is predictable in the sense that editorials typically aim to persuade the reader that they have to act or take a position and the use of modal verbs serves to implicitly encode the speaker's evaluation of what should be done or how the reader should view the world. We can predict that the degree of occurrence of those modal verbs in editorials will be dependent on whether its goal is to persuade the reader to act (as in *Libération*) or simply to adopt the position of the newspaper (as in *Le Figaro).* It is thus not surprising that there are more modulated clauses in *Libération* than in *Le Figaro* (See Tables 1 and 2).

Although, as tables 1 and 2 below show, both editorials have a high percentage of relational clauses, 55% in "Echo" and 46% in "Une Méthode", it is that 9% difference which is significant as we will illustrate in sections 3.1 and 3.2.

## TEXT 1. Une méthode face à l'horreur (Le Figaro 1/9/2004)
Process types

| Process types | | | Middle | | | Effective | | Total/clauses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | modulated | modalized | neutral | modulated | neutral | |
| material | | | 1 | 1 | 8 | 1 | 3 | 1 4 / 3 9 = **36%** |
| behavioural | | | 1 | | | | | 1/39= 2% |

| Process types | | | Middle | | | Effective | | Total/Clauses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| mental | | | | | 1 | | | 1/39=2% |
| verbal | | | | | 5 | | | 5/39=13% |
| relational | attributive | intensive | | | 3 | | 2 | **1 8 / 3 9 = 46%** |
| | | circumstantial | | | 3 | | 1 | |
| | | possessive | 1 | 1 | 3 | | | |
| | identifying | intensive | | | 2 | | | |
| | | circumstantial | | | 1 | | | |
| | existential | | | | 1 | | | |

Table 1. Process types in TEXT 1: Une méthode face à l'horreur (Le Figaro 1/9/2004).

| Process types | | | Middle | | | Effective | | Total/Clauses |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Modulated | modalized | neutral | modulated | neutral | |
| material | | | **2** | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 7/27= **26%** |
| behavioural | | | | | | | | |
| mental | | | **2** | 1 | 3 | | | 6/27= 22% |
| verbal | | | **1** | | | | | 1/27= 3% |
| relational | attributive | intensive | **1** | 2 | 3 | **1** | | 15/27= **55%** |
| | | circumstantial | | | 2 | | 1 | |
| | | possessive | **2** | | 2 | | | |
| | identifying | intensive | **1** | | | | | |
| | | circumstantial | | | | | | |

Table 2. Process types in TEXT 2: **Echo (Libération 31/8/2004).**

## 2.1. The construal of ideology through transitivity patterns in *Le Figaro*

The overall Theme of "Une Méthode" is that the French Government is doing everything it can to free the two journalists and that its methods are going to work. The Government is represented as a participant that is actively involved in the process of gaining the release of the two journalists, a government that has succeeded in releasing hostages in the past and is going to succeed today. This positive ideological positioning of the action of the French government is foregrounded by the use of 10% more material clauses in that text (36%) than in "Echo" (26%). But of even greater significance is that the Agent in effective material clauses are all French officials: "The French envoys"; "intelligence agents"; "general Philippe Rondot" (on two occasions). Furthermore all Actors in middle material clauses are also France or French officials: "The country"; "France" (on three occasions); "the Foreign minister"; "the diplomats who went to Bagdad" and "experts". France is also the only Agent in relational effective clauses where "it brings peace in the Middle-East" and "doubles its public relations efforts". Thus France is foregrounded as the main Agent of change and as the only Actor. Against such a strong France, the "kidnappers will have difficulty justifying their abject blackmail" and are represented as having "failed in what they hoped to do". Furthermore the only thing that the extremists in France are able to do is to shut up ("In the Islam of France, the extremists have been forced into silence").

**Agent in material clauses**: "The French envoys" ; "intelligence agents"; "the general Philippe Rondot" (2)
**Actors in middle material clauses**: "The country"; "France" (3); "the Foreign minister"; "the diplomats who went to Bagdad" and "experts".
**Agent in relational clauses**: "France" (Goal: bring peace to the Middle-East); "France" (Goal: to double its public relations efforts);
Medium in an effective Behavioural clause: "The extremists" (They were forced to shut up)

**Table 3.** Summary of Agent and Actor functions in *Le Figaro*.

Thus ideology in this text is partly symbolically articulated by foregrounding France as the only Actor and Agent and by having a greater number of material clauses than the text from Libération, the message conveyed being that France is very active and that its actions are working (even though they have not yet secured the release of the hostages).

2.2. The construal of ideology through transitivity patterns in *Libération*

The editorial titled "Echo" published in *Libération* on 24th June 2004 foregrounds the role that ordinary people can play: the journalists who tried to build a bridge between cultures ; the mass protests on the street in response to the kidnapping. The solution, if it comes, will come from below. This is clearly shown in the transitivity resources.

In "Echo" there are two striking features. The first is that there are fewer material clauses and only one of them is effective, i.e. agentive. The second is the fairly important use of modals both of modulation and modalization. The general Theme of "Echo" is that the unanimous condemnation of the kidnapping across both muslim and non muslim communities is more powerful than all the French Government's efforts, a position that is in direct contrast with the ideology of *Le Figaro*. This Theme or second-order meaning is foregrounded by the choice of "The unanimous condemnation of the kidnapping of two French journalists" as the only Agent of a material clause in the entire text; this Agent is also the Theme of the first clause of the text which pertains to the evaluative orientation stage thus foregrounding the ideology of the text from the start. The opening lines of the editorial thus convey the message that only people power and not Government action can have any impact on the kidnappers.

The other Agent in this text is "Our two colleagues" but in a relational clause: what is important is the way the journalists saw themselves, as a bridge between the Arab and European worlds. The foregrounding of these two Agents is a beautiful illustration of the symbiosis of ideology and grammar where the two Agents are echoing each other in the same way that the unanimous emotion echoes the commitment of the journalists to bridging the gap between the Arab and European worlds.

If we look at the Actors in middle clauses in order of occurrence in the texts, we have "The government"; Arab leaders; a generalised subject "on" (all of us), thus foregrounding that everyone is doing something but that in the end it is our action as readers that is needed.

> **Agent in material effective clause**: "The unanimous condemnation of the kidnapping of two French journalists" (Goal: bring some relief);
>
> **Agent in relational attributive effective clause;** "Our two colleagues" (Goal: to be a bridge between the Arab and European worlds)
>
> **Actors** in middle material clauses: The government; Arab leaders, "on", all of us.

**Table 4.** Summary of Agent and Actor functions in *Libération*

## 3. Appraisal systems

As we have shown elsewhere (Caffarel and Rechniewski, 2008), the ideology of a text is construed not by one linguistic feature alone but by what we might term its density - in other words, it is the layering and interaction of the linguistic resources mobilised that combine to create higher order meaning. Interpretation of ideology requires the analyst to look for elements of redundancy and overdetermination in the text. Thus our analysis of the transitivity resources mobilised in the two editorials suggests an interpretation of their ideological positioning but this must be extended and checked by considering the relation of transitivity resources to other features of the text. We turn therefore to consider the contribution of the appraisal resources in the construction of the contrasting viewpoints of the two editorials.

Appraisal resources (identifying instances of affect, judgement, and appreciation) are clearly of the utmost significance in analysing ideology (See Martin & White 2005 on Appraisal). They may involve explicit evaluation : ie attitudinal inscription, which supposes largely fixed and stable terms of evaluation ; or implicit evaluation, attitudinal tokens, formulations where no single item in and of itself assigns value - their function is dependent on their context.

A further aspect of appraisal that may be relevant to the study of ideology is that of engagement - the resources of intersubjective stance, resources which vary the terms of the speaker's engagement with propositions and proposals (eg disclaim ; concur ; entertain, etc.) and which vary what is at stake interpersonally both in individual utterances and as the text unfolds cumulatively (White, 2004). This may be relevant to the study of ideology not only through the mobilisation of engagement resources to persuade the reader of the correctness of the ideas expressed, but through the evocation of a community of like-minded people, thus encouraging the readers, through identification with the speaker, to define themselves as belonging to a community with shared norms, beliefs, values. We have therefore added to the categories of engagement proposed by White that of 'identification', to refer to those cases where the speaker identifies the community to which he belongs, and/or assumes the reader to belong.

Finally we have to take into account Attribution. It is commonplace in media texts, especially in news reporting, for attitudinal assessments to be located in material that is attributed to outside sources. This enables the journalist to assert that they are not necessarily themselves supporting or advancing those evaluations. This technique, which creates the impression of dialogue (heteroglossia), can in fact be used to close down dialogue. There are

various mechanisms by which journalists can indicate that they are more or less closely aligned with the cited source and that they hold the attributed material to be more or less reliable or plausible, through the use of terms that dispute or even ridicule the other voices, and through negative contextualisation.

Tables 5 and 6 below offer a detailed analysis of the forms of appraisal and instances of engagement in the two texts. The following discussion seeks to highlight only the key differences between the texts and their significance for the interpretation of the ideological positioning of the two newspapers.

## 3.1. Appraisal selections in *Le Figaro*

In recent work on the generic structure of editorials presented at the ASFS (Australian Society of French Studies) conference in Melbourne in 2008, we identified an initial stage of attitudinal orientation in the titles and in the first lines of editorials. It is here that we often find concentration of attitudinal inscription that strongly orients the reader towards adopting attitudes not only of judgement and appreciation but of affect. This is particularly true of the editorial in *Le Figaro* where the attitudinal inscription in the title and opening lines is at the extreme end of negative appreciation and affect: "horror", "torture", "horrible" (together with terms of intensification such as "nothing more"). The position of these words at the end of short phrases and sentences - the short sentences are rather like maxims in form - gives them added weight. These reactions (of affect) are not attributed to named individual or groups but are presupposed to be shared in the universe of writer and reader. The use of the term "torture" to describe the emotions of those who wait, reminds us of the worst fates of other hostages, while also establishing a (weak) link between the suffering of the hostages and the 'suffering' of the readers. The later reference to this "ignoble blackmail" combines attitudinal inscription of negative judgement with affect - an emotional reaction of revulsion is called for. There are several examples in this editorial where the powerful choice of lexis of appraisal both conveys judgment and arouses emotion, combining to arouse the readers' disgust at the despicable tactics and inhumanity of the kidnappers.

Transitivity analysis of "Une méthode" revealed the strong and effective role attributed by *Le Figaro* to the French government. This analysis is supported via Attitudinal inscription in the lexical choices made to describe the government's actions: in the Processes that represent how they undertake their strong action: the use for example of the verb *Arracher* – to extract with force.

This effective role is also encoded in the metaphor in paragraph 2 that likens the government's strategy for freeing the hostages to a "bunch of keys"; this running metaphor, that continues throughout the paragraph, concretises diverse and unknown interventions, into the form of a material tool for the progressive, methodical and successful unlocking of doors, to bring about the liberation of the hostages.

The metaphor of the bunch of keys and the comparison to the successful outcome of past kidnappings is part of a process that Serge Moscovici terms "anchoring", a process that links the unknown to the known, that "draws something foreign and disturbing into our particular system of categories" (Moscovici, 1984: 30). It is clear that anchoring can have profound

ideological force: how the new event is categorised determines the attitudes we may hold towards it and our expectations of its outcome. The metaphor of the bunch of keys anchors the government's interventions in familiar, domestic action; while this new case of kidnapping is linked to a previous one in which the government successfully negotiated the freedom of the hostages.

A further metaphor, the "web of factions", applied to Tehran in paragraph 2, is also extended through a series of cognate lexical items and metaphors in paragraph 5, where it refers to the situation in Iraq. This metaphor emphasises the contrast between the unity of purpose of the French government and nation, and the fragmented but dangerous and uncertain forces that dominate Iraq. Engagement resources are mobilised to persuade the reader to adhere to the position of the newspaper: the editorial addresses the reader as though a discussion is taking place: expressions such as "at least"; "it is not surprising"; "their shot has gone wide of the mark", apparently include the reader in the development of the argument, however one-sided the conversation actually is.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Le Figaro**<br>**1 septembre 2004**<br>**Une méthode face à l'horreur**<br>**Method in the face of <u>horror</u>** (- affect). | |
| <u>underlined</u> : attitudinal inscription<br>*italics* : engagement | Attitudinal tokens and comments |
| 1. The wait is <u>torture</u> (-affect). There is <u>nothing more</u> (intensification) <u>horrible</u> (- affect). *At least* (concession) there is the <u>consolation</u> (+ve affect) of knowing that the country has <u>spared no effort</u> (+judgement with intensification) to secure (seize) the freedom of Georges Malbrunot and Christian Chesnot. | |
| 2. France has renewed <u>the "bunch of keys"</u> method it had used during the Lebanese war. To recover the Beirut hostages the French envoys had first to turn a whole series of keys: the one which opened the Syrian door, as Damascus controlled the country; the one which opened the Iranian door, as Tehran controlled the Shiites and, finally, the many skeleton keys providing access to the <u>web of factions*</u> which at that time shared the profitable market of Western prisoners. | The running metaphor of the 'bunch of keys' is a positive attitudinal token evoking methodical and successful tool. |
| 3. Today, Paris is directing at least three simultaneous strategies. The Foreign Minister, Michel Barnier, has made a tour of the Arab capitals to ask for their support. <u>Nobody</u> failed to respond to the appeal: Egypt and Jordan, the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, and the Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Moussa. <u>All</u> repeated that France had dared to condemn the American intervention in Iraq; <u>all</u> emphasised that France had never stopped affirming that, to bring peace to the Middle East, a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must first be found. In the face of this mobilisation, the kidnappers will have difficulty justifying their <u>abject blackmail</u> (- judgement) with the excuse of a fight against the law on the headscarf. | The metaphor of the 'web of factions' is a negative attitudinal token taken up in paragraph 5, applied there to Iraq<br><br><br><br>Nobody/all/all in theme position emphasise unanimity |

| | |
|---|---|
| 4. France has coupled this public relations effort with action on the ground. The diplomats who have gone to Baghdad are approaching political authorities as well as religious leaders. Notably the Committee of the Ulemas, the principle Sunni organisation. For their part, intelligence agents have utilised their networks to try to establish a direct line of communication with the kidnappers. | This information constitutes positive attitudinal tokens - concerted action based on specialist knowledge. |
| 5. The Iraqi <u>mosaic*</u> is not confined to <u>sects and ethnic groups. The tribes*</u> must also be taken into account which, themselves, can include members of <u>differing religions and nationalities*</u>. Only experts accustomed to the <u>fluctuating borderlines*</u> of loyalties in this country can find their way in this <u>labyrinth*.</u> It is *therefore not surprising* (concur/endorse) that General Philippe Rondot has returned to duty at 68 years of age. Arabist and formerly of the DGSE, he had taken part in the negotiations to liberate the Beirut hostages and succeeded, in 1994, in capturing in Sudan the terrorist Carlos. | *A number of terms with similar meanings evoke the complexity of a situation that only experts can manage |
| 6. These international operations had been preceded by a <u>particularly</u> (intensification) <u>impressive</u> (+ appreciation) campaign of mobilisation in France. If the kidnappers had hoped to divide the French by reviving the debate on the Muslim headscarf in schools, *their shot has gone wide of the mark* (disclaim: deny). French Muslims were the first to go beyond their differences and find common cause in the unanimous denunciation of the kidnappers. *This is the paradoxical result* (pronounce) of the hostage drama: in the Islam of France, the <u>extremists</u> (-judgement) have been forced into silence. | Rondot's achievements constitute positive attitudinal tokens – they demonstrate his expertise |

**Table 5.** Appraisal resources in "Une Méthode".

## 3.2. Appraisal selections in *Libération*

While we might expect to find similar condemnation of the extremists and their action in *Libération*, in fact its editorial uses little  negative appraisal and more neutral terms, in order, we might argue, to avoid further polarising the situation and the divisions between France and other cultures.  For example, the plight of the journalists is referred to in paragraph 1 as "their misfortune"- a term which denotes more usually an accident of fate, rather than the outcome of wicked human agency. The kidnapping itself is referred to as the "methods of terrorism": methods is a neutral term, it carries little attitudinal weight.

We note in the first paragraph (see Table 6 below) a series of nominalisations : "unity in condemnation" ; "involvement of diverse sections"; "emotion aroused by their misfortune" - in theme position. These nominalisations foreground the achievement, the end result, and not the process nor the particular agents involved. They attribute agency to the qualities of unity that are represented as characteristic of the French population's response to this crisis.

The thesis of the editorial, that strength lies in unity and community, is also conveyed by the positive engagement with the reader : "this is all the more appreciated". It is underlined again in the final word of the first paragraph, where we find one of the few examples of attitudinal inscription in the editorial : "the progress of a sense of community is <u>precious</u>" :

"precious" is a term of appreciation which calls on an emotional response to protect this valued good. The priority, the most valuable aim, is accorded therefore to the achievement of unity adn community. The anchoring here places the kidnapping in relation to the difficult long-term process of closer collaboration between communities, which must be pursued, however difficult the current context.

The use of engagement resources is far more pronounced in *Libération* than in *Le Figaro*, reflecting perhaps a younger readership, that contests hierarchy and authority, and that expects to be addressed on an equal footing, as a partner in dialogue and in action. However this does not mean that *Libération*'s stance is more open to other viewpoints - it opens up dialogue only to quickly close it down via condemnation and ridicule. Thsu in paragraph 2, the argument of those who believe France would be protected from extremisim by her policies in the Middle East, is rejected as "stupid" and "cynical". *Libération* uses engagement resources of identification ("nothing allows us…") to strongly involve the reader in its perspective : its readers are presupposed to be part of those promoting the sense of community between cultures. The use of "on" is particularly pronounced in this text : "on" (in French) obscures the distinction between the self and other, allowing a closer assumed alignment between reader and writer. Here it allows for the implicit inclusion of the reader in the writer's perspective and encourages identification with the broader community of those who share these views – however unclear the identity of this group might be. Several of the examples of engagement are 'objective' (ie. subjectivity is obscured or impersonalised, as in "it must … be recognised"), giving added weight to the pronouncements of the author.

| Editorial Libération Echo<br><br>Par Gérard DUPUY mardi 31 août 2004<br><br>underlined : attitudinal inscription<br>*italics* : engagement | Attitudinal tokens<br>and other comments |
|---|---|
| 1. The unanimity in the condemnation of the kidnapping of the two French journalists adds a little relief to the anxiety ([qualified]+ affect). The involvement of the various groups making up the Muslim population in this rejection *must be emphasised* (endorse), not a single voice having failed to condemn the methods of terrorism. *This is to be the more appreciated*, (endorse) as *our two colleagues* (identification) wanted to be, professionally, a bridge (metaphor + judgement) between *the Arab and European worlds*.(identification). The emotion provoked by their misfortune(-appreciation) echoes their commitment (+judgement) as journalists, by favouring communication and a sense of community beyond communities whose progress is precious (+appreciation). | Note the large number of nominalisations<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Misfortune: mild term |
| 2. The government has taken for its part diplomatic action as visible as possible. *One must have no illusions* (counter*)* over the effect of these gestures. France has nothing to negotiate with the kidnappers and, although they could only be sensitive to threats, they remain sheltered from them. *To believe that the country's policy on Iraq would* | The strongest term of attit. inscription: 'precious' refers not to the kidnapping but to the need to develop a sense of community. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *immunise it against the demands of the extremists,* (entertain) *no doubt required as much <u>stupidity as cynicism</u>* (counter; -judgement). *Nothing allows us* (counter) to make this assumption concerning the policy followed by Chirac with fanfare. *One must moreover note* (proclaim/pronounce) that the kidnappers are linked to Al-Qaeda, which has never excluded France from its potential targets. | Dialogistic opening is closed down via strong negative judgement of those who entertain these ideas |
| | 'us' - engagement(identification) |
| 3. *If no particular protection could be expected* (concede), *it must nevertheless be recognised,* (counter) a posteriori, that many Arab leaders have rallied in support of the French hostages, as they had never done for others before them. The presence of Islamist figures Muslim Brothers or Salafists among the supporters sought and obtained by the French shows the kidnappers' isolation. *Could the kidnappers be sensitive to this?* (entertain). *Even if one is convinced (concede)* of the <u>radical nihilism</u> (-judgement) of their convictions*, it is <u>right,</u> (+judgement;endorse) whatever the circumstances, to do everything that is compatible with <u>dignity and reason</u> (+judgement) to secure the liberation of Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot. | Attitudinal token : the info 'as they had never done for others' supports the argument of the isolation of the kidnappers |

**Table 6.** Appraisal resources in "Echo".

## 4. Thematic analysis and paratextual contribution to meaning

The order of presentation of content is significantly different in the two editorials. *Le Figaro*, after the initial phase of attitudinal orientation, thematically foregrounds the role of the government, and presents it metonymically as the representative of France, identical with the country itself. It only mentions the popular mobilisation in the last paragraph. *Libération* on the contrary focuses first and foremost on the role of the people. Moreover it represents people and government as distinct entities, a distinction that is reflected in the physical separation of the paragraphs, the first devoted to the population, the second to (the discredited attempts of) the government, its activity identified as additional or separate through the use of "de son côté"/ for its part.

## 5. Dialogism and intertextuality

Editorials are often written in conscious dialogue with, and opposition to, the editorial views of rival newspapers and media, the projects of governments, and the platforms of political parties. Indeed we could argue that their overt dialogism is a feature of the generic attributes of editorials. Dialogism can be conveyed by taking up the vocabulary that might be used by an opponent and using it ironically; using direct and indirect quotation to support or ridicule a position; taking up an argument and discrediting it through ridicule, counter argument.
        We find a compelling example of this latter strategy in the editorial in *Libération*:

"To believe that the country's policy on Iraq would immunise it against the demands of the extremists, required as much stupidity as cynicism."

This passage can be read as a response to the arguments in *Le Figaro* : "All repeated that France had dared to condemn the American intervention in Iraq". And yet *Libération*'s editorial was written a day earlier, indicating that these are well-known, predictable and established rhetorical positions: the debate over the actions that should be taken had been underway for some days and these two texts represent only a tiny fraction of the media coverage of the hostage-taking. Recognition of this ongoing intertextuality aids the interpretation of the contrastive ideological positioning of the two texts.

## 6. Conclusion

This paper has sought to demonstrate that ideological meanings are construed by the foregrounding of features from the overall linguistic system. We have argued that ideologies, world views and cultural norms, are implicated in every linguistic act; they are produced and reproduced in every social interaction in the relationship of author/public/ text in the context of situation. The interpretation that the participants in the communicative event make of the context of situation, and which determines how they will act, is dependent on broader cultural understandings of sex roles, social hierarchies etc. An individual, community or class does not have one set of ideas (ie 'an' ideology); it may have a distinct set of ideas prominent in certain situations (class conflict for example) but it will also share culture-wide representations with other sectors of the society. So any text, while it may foreground a certain set of ideas corresponding to the demands of the context of situation, will also construe many other patterns of ideas characteristic of that society and culture.

This can be illustrated in the study of our two editorials. In the most basic sense, the two editorials are about the same subject matter: the kidnapping of the two journalists. But it would be more accurate to say that this is their point of reference or departure, and that they are each about something else, about how government and society 'work' and should work, about norms and values. *Libération* insists on the necessary development of community sentiment, and the inefficacy of governments in general, and this government in particular. *Le Figaro* aims to demonstrate the capability and farsightedness of the UMP government and president, and their identification with the interests of France. The two editorials thus offer opposing answers to a set of implicit questions about the role of government and the relationship of government to people. *Libération* has a different vision of what 'France' means: its representation of the nation is focused on ordinary French people as actor and community and not on the government as representative of the people. Moreover it differs from *Le Figaro* in its representation of the relationship of France to other cultures and communities: it downplays the "clash of cultures and religions" that characterises the *Figaro* editorial's representation of the Middle East and emphasises, as reasons for supporting the journalists in this ordeal, their "engagement journalistique" in favour of tolerance and understanding, rather than the fact of their nationality.

Beyond their immediate differences, however, we note that the editorials also share important cultural assumptions, values and ideas. They share a broadly secular, humanist, rationalist view of the world : they do not exhort the readers to pray for a solution  nor to

submit to Destiny ; they believe in the efficacy of human action. And both editorials can be said to share a commitment to national interests and an identification with fellow nationals, they view the events from the perspective of France.

We should not therefore refer to 'the' ideology of a text but to sets of ideas that can be foregrounded in relation to a particular 'context of interrogation'. In this case we looked for the political differences relating to the action to be taken and the role of social actors, rather than for broader cultural values. The reference to a 'context of interrogation' should remind us that the linguistic analyst too writes from within culturally-delimited patterns of ideas; this may be particularly significant when - for example - assessing the connotations of terms of appraisal: "analysts need to declare their reading position - since the evaluation one makes of evocations depends on the institutional position one is reading from." (Christie and Martin, 1997: 25).

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**Appendix A**

**Text 1: Une méthode face à l'horreur**
[01, septembre 2004. *Le Figaro*]

L'attente est une torture. Il n'y a rien de plus horrible. Au moins a-t-on la consolation de savoir que le pays n'a ménagé aucun effort pour arracher la libération de Georges Malbrunot et Christian Chesnot.

La France a renoué avec la méthode du «trousseau de clés» qu'elle avait utilisée pendant la guerre du Liban. Pour récupérer les otages de Beyrouth, les émissaires français avaient d'abord dû tourner toute une série de clés : celle qui ouvrait la porte syrienne puisque Damas contrôlait le pays ; celle qui ouvrait la porte iranienne car Téhéran manipulait les chiites et, enfin, les multiples passe-partout donnant accès à la nébuleuse de factions qui se partageaient alors le fructueux marché des prisonniers occidentaux.

Aujourd'hui, Paris mène de front au moins trois stratégies. Le ministre des Affaires étrangères, Michel Barnier, a entrepris une tournée des capitales arabes pour demander leur appui. Personne n'a manqué à l'appel : l'Egypte et la Jordanie, le président palestinien, Yasser Arafat, et le secrétaire général de la Ligue arabe, Amr Moussa. Tous ont répété que la France avait osé condamner l'intervention américaine en Irak ; tous ont souligné qu'elle n'avait jamais cessé d'affirmer que, pour apaiser le Proche-Orient, il faut commencer par trouver une solution au conflit israélo-palestinien. Face à cette mobilisation, les ravisseurs auront du mal à justifier leur ignoble chantage par l'alibi du combat contre la loi sur le voile.

La France a doublé ce travail de relations publiques par une action sur le terrain. Les diplomates qui se sont rendus à Bagdad interviennent aussi bien auprès des autorités politiques que des personnalités religieuses. Notamment le Comité des oulémas, principale organisation sunnite. De leur côté, les agents des services de renseignements ont fait jouer leurs réseaux pour tenter d'établir une ligne de communication directe avec les ravisseurs.

La mosaïque irakienne ne se limite pas aux sectes et aux ethnies. Il faut encore compter avec les tribus qui, elles-mêmes, peuvent comprendre des membres de religions et d'origines nationales différentes. Seuls des experts, coutumiers des frontières flottantes des allégeances de ce pays, peuvent trouver leur chemin dans ce labyrinthe. Il n'est donc pas étonnant que le général Philippe Rondot ait repris du service à 68 ans. Arabisant et ancien de la DGSE, il avait participé aux tractations pour faire libérer les otages de Beyrouth et réussi, en 1994, à capturer au Soudan le terroriste Carlos.

Ces opérations extérieures avaient été précédées d'une campagne de mobilisation en France particulièrement impressionnante. Si les ravisseurs avaient espéré diviser les Français en relançant le débat sur le voile à l'école, ils ont manqué leur coup. Les musulmans français ont été les premiers à effacer leurs différences pour se retrouver dans la dénonciation unanime des ravisseurs. C'est le résultat paradoxal du drame des otages : dans l'islam de France, les extrémistes ont été contraints de se taire.
Charles Lambroschini

**Translation of Text 1:**
**Method in the face of horror.**

The wait is torture. There is nothing more horrible. At least there is the consolation of knowing that the country has spared no effort to secure (seize) the freedom of Georges Malbrunot and Christian Chesnot.

France has renewed the "bunch of keys" method it had used during the Lebanese war. To recover the Beirut hostages the French envoys had first to turn a whole series of keys: the one which opened the Syrian door, as Damascus controlled the country; the one which opened the Iranian door, as Tehran controlled the Shiites and, finally, the many skeleton keys providing access to the web of factions which at that time shared the profitable market of western prisoners.

Today, Paris is directing at least three simultaneous strategies. The Foreign Minister, Michel Barnier, has made a tour of the Arab capitals to ask for their support. Nobody failed to respond to the appeal: Egypt and Jordan, the Palestinian President, Yasser Arafat, and the Secretary General of the Arab League, Amr Moussa. All repeated that France had dared to condemn the American intervention in Iraq; all emphasised that France had never stopped affirming that, to bring peace to the Middle East, a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict must first be found. In the face of this mobilisation, the kidnappers will have difficulty justifying their abject blackmail with the excuse of a fight against the law on the headscarf.

France has coupled this public relations effort with action on the ground. The diplomats who have gone to Baghdad are approaching political authorities as well as religious leaders. Notably the Committee of the Ulemas, the principle Sunni organisation. For their part, intelligence agents have utilised their networks to try to establish a direct line of communication with the kidnappers.

The Iraqi mosaic is not confined to sects and ethnic groups. The tribes must also be taken into account which, themselves, can include members of differing religions and nationalities. Only experts accustomed to the fluctuating borderlines of loyalties in this country can find their way in this labyrinth. It is therefore not surprising that General Philippe Rondot has returned to duty at 68 years of age. Arabist and formerly of the DGSE, he had taken part in the negotiations to liberate the Beirut hostages and succeeded, in 1994, in capturing in Sudan the terrorist Carlos.

These international operations had been preceded by a particularly impressive campaign of mobilisation in France. If the kidnappers had hoped to divide the French by reviving the debate on the Muslim headscarf in schools, their shot has gone wide of the mark. French Muslims were the first to go beyond their differences and find common cause in the unanimous denunciation of the kidnappers. This is the paradoxical result of the hostage drama: in the Islam of France, the extremists have been forced into silence.

**Appendix B**

**Text 2: Echo**
Par Gérard DUPUY [mardi 31 août 2004. *Libération*]

L 'unanimité dans la condamnation de l'enlèvement des deux journalistes français mêle un peu de soulagement à l'inquiétude. L'implication des diverses composantes de la population musulmane dans ce rejet doit être soulignée, aucune voix n'y ayant manqué à la condamnation des méthodes du terrorisme. Cela est d'autant mieux venu que nos deux confrères se voulaient, professionnellement, un pont entre les mondes arabe et européen. L'émotion suscitée par leur malheur fait écho à leur engagement journalistique, en favorisant une communication et un sens de la communauté au-delà des

communautés dont l'avancée est précieuse.

Le gouvernement a déployé de son côté une activité diplomatique aussi visible que possible. On ne doit pas s'illusionner sur la portée de ces gestes. La France n'a rien à négocier avec les ravisseurs et, alors qu'ils ne pourraient être sensibles qu'aux menaces, ils restent à l'abri de celles-ci. Pour croire que la politique irakienne du pays l'immuniserait contre les exactions des extrémistes, il fallait sans doute autant de bêtise que de cynisme. Rien ne permet de faire cette supposition concernant la politique suivie par Chirac avec éclat. On doit d'ailleurs remarquer que les ravisseurs sont liés à AI-Qaeda, qui n'a jamais exclu la France d'entre ses cibles potentielles.

Si on ne pouvait attendre de protection particulière, il faut en revanche constater, *a posteriori,* que bien de dirigeants arabes se sont mobilisés pour les otages français comme ils ne l'avaient fait pour aucun autre avant eux. La présence de figures islamistes Frères musulmans ou salafistes parmi les soutiens sollicités et obtenus par les Français montre l'isolement des ravisseurs. Ceux-ci pourraient-ils y être sensibles ? Même si on est convaincu du nihilisme radical de leurs convictions, il convient, en tout état de cause, de faire tout ce qui est compatible avec la dignité et la raison pour obtenir la libération de Christian Chesnot et Georges Malbrunot.

**Translation of Text 2:**
**Editorial *Libération***
**Echo**

The unanimity in the condemnation of the kidnapping of the two French journalists adds a little relief to the anxiety. The involvement of the various groups making up the Muslim population in this rejection must be emphasised, not a single voice having failed to condemn the methods of terrorism. This is to be the more appreciated, as our two colleagues wanted to be, professionally, a bridge between the Arab and European worlds. The emotion provoked by their misfortune echoes their commitment as journalists, by favouring communication and a sense of community beyond communities whose progress is precious.

The government has taken for its part diplomatic action as visible as possible. One must have no illusions over the effect of these gestures. France has nothing to negotiate with the kidnappers and, although they could only be sensitive to threats, they remain sheltered from them. To believe that the country's policy on Iraq would immunise it against the demands of the extremists, no doubt required as much stupidity as cynicism. Nothing allows us to make this assumption concerning the policy followed by Chirac with fanfare. One must moreover note that the kidnappers are linked to Al-Qaeda, which has never excluded France from among its potential targets.

If no particular protection could be expected, it must nevertheless be recognised, a posteriori, that many Arab leaders have rallied in support of the French hostages, as they had never done for others before them. The presence of Islamist figures Muslim Brothers or Salafists among the supporters sought and obtained by the French shows the kidnappers' isolation. Could the kidnappers be sensitive to this? Even if one is convinced of the radical nihilism of their convictions, it is right, whatever the circumstances, to do everything that is compatible with dignity and reason to secure the liberation of Christian Chesnot and Georges Malbrunot.